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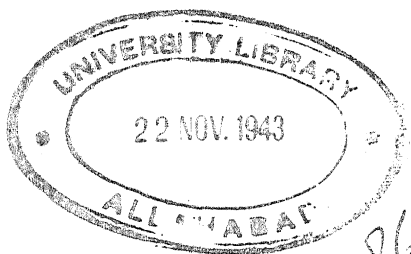
# CONFLICTING THEORIES OF EDUCATION

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To  
H. R.,

*who through love of teaching  
has retained her youth.*

## PREFACE

THE accompanying book comprises a series of related papers and addresses prepared during 1937 and 1938. The first Chapter lays the foundation for a critical interpretation of education in the present social and political setting. The remaining Chapters which deal with present-day educational theories and trends derive their unity in the light of this critical interpretation and the problems which emerge from the general presentation of the current background of education. Fundamentally the book is inspired by the realization of the important part that education must play today in safeguarding democratic institutions and ideals.

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I. L. K.

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## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

THE interest in educational theory on the part not only of the profession but of the informed lay public has never been, in the present writer's experience, so keen and so widely spread as it is today. The interest of the lay public is clearly attested by the numerous articles in non-professional journals and magazines dealing with the tenets, practices, and claims of the Progressive school of educational theory and motivated in part by the nation-wide vogue given to the term, "Essentialist," in February, 1938, on the mere supposition, broadcast in the press reports, that a rival school of theory had been launched. Professional interest, of course, has been in evidence over a much longer period, but its intensification during the past two or three years is evidenced by the reception that has been accorded to such books as Wm. H. Kilpatrick's "Remaking the Curriculum," Boyd H. Bode's Kappa Delta Pi lecture for 1937, "Democracy as a Way of Life," and, within the year just drawing to a close, Professor Bode's "Progressive Education at the Crossroads" and John Dewey's "Education and Experience," the Kappa Delta Pi lecture for 1938, which in seven months called for five reprintings—

probably a record for an essay in the philosophy of education.

The causes of this interest are not far to seek. They lie in the profound social and economic changes that followed in the wake of the World War, some of the most fundamental of which have come to clear definition only within the past five or six years:—world-wide depressions; in our own country, especially, the stresses and strains, even the creakings and groans, resulting so unexpectedly and on so wide a scale from the developments of technology and the consequent dislocations of the economic structure; abroad, the emergence of the totalitarian states and their threats to democracy; almost everywhere, the upsetting of age-old standards of conduct, both individual and national. All these have inevitably given rise to new educational problems, which in their turn have demanded reinterpretations of the meaning and functions of education either as a basis for, or as a rationalization of, clearly needed readjustments in educational practice. Whatever may be the case in the fields of politics and economics, in education it is the theorist and the philosopher whose counsel is now most eagerly sought.

In the present volume, Professor Kandel makes a distinctive addition to the discussions represented by the books just mentioned. He speaks as an authentic student both of the history of education and of comparative education. His views derive especial significance from his intimate, first-hand acquaintance

with the educational systems of other countries, including not only Great Britain and the British overseas dominions, but also many of the continental countries and the more important of the Latin-American republics. As an educational theorist his fundamental postulates are in some ways at variance with those of Dewey, Bode, and Kilpatrick, who reflect the basic tenets of the Pragmatic school of thought. Like them, however, he speaks as a sincere and seasoned democrat, keenly apprehensive of the deepening dangers which threaten the democratic ideals and our hard-won democratic institutions.

WILLIAM C. BAGLEY



## I. The Strife of Tongues<sup>1</sup>

THE progress of education has always been subject to changing currents of thought, and the periods of decadence have always been those in which the schools have failed to respond to such changes. To anyone familiar, even superficially, with the history of education illustrations of both theses will occur immediately. The period of greatest intellectual activity in Greece was accompanied by changes in educational theory, which came too late, perhaps, to save the schools. The rise of the medieval university was stimulated by a desire to meet the new intellectual demands of the age. The Renaissance brought a new vitality and a quickening of interest in education, followed all too soon by the crystallization of the schools into a routine from which they were saved only by the establishment of the first modern universities in Germany and the intellectual awakening which resulted in part from the early scientific movement and in part from the movement known as Neohumanism. The reorganization of secondary education developed slowly through the nineteenth cen-

<sup>1</sup> The John Smyth Memorial Lecture, delivered at the University of Melbourne, August 31, 1937.

century, but it was not until the last decade of that century that the full significance of the unrest which had been growing steadily began to be understood. The nineteenth century was also the era of the beginnings of universal, compulsory elementary education, the provision of which was prompted and stimulated by the rise of national states and the recognition of the need of providing at least a minimum of education for the citizens or subjects of the future.

There is a tendency on the part of those who would deny that anything can be learned from the past to dismiss all educational practices up to the present as making for a static society or aiming at the transmission of mere knowledge. Those who follow this tendency are apt to forget that, inadequate as they may have been in many respects, the aims of education in the past were social in intent and were directed to the promotion of the welfare of societies. And if the schools did devote themselves to imparting what are today characterized as "inert ideas," a charge which cannot be accepted as universally applicable, they did expect to train the mind to cope with new situations. The purpose was there, even if later studies have proved the inadequacy of the psychology upon which it was founded. That the world did progress, that it did produce intellectual giants, are facts which cannot be ignored and for which some credit must be given to centuries of forgotten teachers. This statement is not intended as a plea for the continuance or restoration of the education of a pa

era, but as an indication of certain trends of educational thought in the contemporary scene. The elementary school everywhere, the secondary-school tradition in Germany, the "public schools" in England, the high school and college in the United States, to cite only these examples, are being attacked as belonging to the past and as having little to offer for the present and still less for the future.

Nearly twenty-five centuries ago Plato emphasized education and rearing as the great point for the guardians to observe, for, he said, "if by a good education the citizens be made reasonable men, they will readily see through all those questions that are fundamental to the stability of the State." There is scarcely a word in Plato's statement which is not the object of discussion today. The certainty which he had that knowledge is virtue, or which Bacon had when he said that knowledge is power, or which leaders in the movement for universal, compulsory education had when they used the slogan, "Open a school and close a jail"—all that certainty has disappeared, and with it the old faith in intellectual training. As recently as thirty years ago it was still possible to define the concept of liberal education in terms that were universally understood and accepted. If today the definitions of liberal education from Aristotle to Matthew Arnold are referred to at all, they are cited as illustrations of an unchanging or "static" concept of education or as texts for critical discussion.

The reason for this is clear. Plato and those who

in the past undertook to define the meaning of education did so in terms which they regarded as applicable to all situations and to all times. When Plato saw a close relationship between education and the stability of the state, or when Aristotle stated that "that which contributes most to the permanence of constitutions is the adaptation of education to the form of government," they implied the existence of certain pre-established demands, manners, conduct, behavior, ideas, ideals, discipline, and authority. But that stability for which education was considered to be fundamental has either disappeared, so that any semblance of certainty as to the function of education has disappeared with it, or else certainty has been so firmly established that education has been assigned a function which is degrading to the spirit of man and of humanity.

The conflict which is going on today in education is between the new and the old, between progressives and traditionalists, between those who advocate active as against passive learning or a dynamic as against a static education. Each group chooses its own line of battle and neither fights on the real issue of fundamental values which transcend the details of curriculum and methods of instruction. The real issue is whether this conflict is a phenomenon of education or of the times in which we live, whether, in fact, problems of educational theory, beyond the details of techniques, can be discussed except in terms of human values. It is one thing to claim that educa-

tion must be sensitive to the changes of the times; it is another to consider human values in order to discover the meaning and bearing upon them of these changes.

Those who insist that we are living in an era of great and rapid changes look upon only one side of the picture; the other side of the picture—whether human values change with the same rapidity—is ignored, or, if not ignored, is dismissed with the suggestion that human nature must be changed—as it is alleged to be in Soviet Russia. To deny that the world is changing and changing rapidly as a result of the progress of science and the applications of science to technology and the material aspects of life would be foolish; it would be equally foolish to ignore the resulting effects upon economics and social life. But there still remains the question whether man as a human being is so different today as a result of these changes and whether the fundamental problems with which he is confronted are so different from the problem with which Plato, for example, was concerned. Those who stress the importance of change appear to confuse the idea of progress and the progress of ideas. The idea of progress tends to lead to a preoccupation with externals, with the superficial, with the quantitative, and with the immediate present; those concerned with the progress of ideas, while not ignoring the changes on the surface, are more likely to search for meanings, purposes, and values and to relate them to the more fundamental

values in the progress of civilization and culture. In the words of Dean Inge ("The Idea of Progress," in *Outspoken Essays*, Second Series, p. 169; New York, 1934), "On the theory of progress what is 'coming' must be right. Forms of government and modes of thought which for the time being are not in favour are assumed to have been permanently left behind. A student of history who believed in the cyclical changes and long swings of the pendulum would take a very different and probably much sounder view of contemporary affairs. The votaries of progress mistake the flowing tide for the river of eternity, and when the tide turns they are likely to be left stranded like corks and scraps of seaweed which mark the high-water tide."

The emphasis on change has resulted from the development of the sciences and their applications, inspired by a certain romantic vision of the perfectibility of man, which derives from the philosophy of the eighteenth century, and stimulated by the weary yearnings for a millennium which always follow a great crisis like the War or fear of war. In this respect our age is not different from that of the seventeenth century, when a Bacon saw the vision of a new world built on the applications of the new science, when a host of Utopias was written, when Grotius and, a little later, Kant saw a world brought under the control of international law and international institutions, and when Comenius, like H. G. Wells today, dreamed of settling all the ills that af-

flicted and perplexed man by a pansophic encyclopedia.

An authoritarian world, we are told, began to be undermined by Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton, and the process of the destruction of authority was continued by the Darwins of yesterday and the Einsteins of today. Philosophizing about ultimates was replaced by faith in a scientific attitude that nothing is fixed and by insistence that values must also be subject to constant reconstruction. The development and applications of science have speeded up the tempo of life; they have brought about a new industrial revolution which has produced urbanization and congestion of populations; distances have been annihilated; and the result is universal unrest. Science, which promised so much for the amelioration of man's lot on earth, has itself produced a sense of insecurity and uncertainty because man no longer has any faith to which to cling, and this precariousness of life has been made the basis of an educational philosophy. To see this as one of the results of the development of science is not to minimize the positive contribution which it has made to human welfare and intellectual awakening.

The undermining of authoritarianism which is implicit in the progress of the sciences has had its parallels in all phases of human thought. In conduct and behavior, in taste and appreciation, in the realm of ideas and ideals, standards are either shifting or they have ceased to exist. The "lid is off the uni-



verse," the world is adrift and left without beliefs or with a will-to-believe which too often becomes wishful thinking. Everywhere in the past three or four decades there has become prevalent the consciousness of a void. Science, which had undermined authority, beliefs, and faith, had failed, despite its promise of bringing nature under man's control, to provide any substitute, not even faith in science. The destructive element, for which science was responsible, affected all other fields of human thought and endeavor.

In the literature of the nineteenth century virtue almost invariably triumphed over vice, success was the reward of virtue, and nature was, as a rule, beautiful. Even before the close of the century the new fashion had set in, and literature began to concern itself with the ills and misery of the world and with man as the creature of chance, or of social and economic forces beyond his control, or of his own subliminal past. The beauty of nature, romantic hopes, interest in adventure, and the success motif gave place to social criticism, to disquisitions on the dominating power of environmental forces, and to attacks on traditional virtues and current values. Devotion to the good, the true, the beautiful was replaced by minute and detailed analyses of the ugliness, the cruelty, and the futility of life. The nineteenth-century novel had tended to describe character, and the types stood out to be recognized everywhere; the novel in the twentieth century turned to analyze psychological moments and processes of



thought streaming from inner, uncontrolled, and uncontrollable compulsions. The poet ceased to see sermons in stones and began to write stony sermons. This trend to immersion in the destructive element, as Joseph Conrad called it, had begun before the War; the disillusionment following the War helped only to deepen it.

Two results flowed from this intellectual and spiritual upheaval—on the one hand, there developed a strong desire to find meaning in an apparently chaotic world; on the other, there was a tendency to yield to the meaningless. The one group sought for an answer in creative evolution, in intuition and vitalism, or in an organic unity of the universe mathematically derived, or in emergent evolution, or in some form of religion. The second group, accepting a meaningless world, turned to irrationalism, with its stress on the incongruous and a universe without logic or pattern, or to expressionism of the inner self as a series of unco-ordinated events, images, shocks, and sensations, or to surrealism, with intellectual attitudes affected by superrational emotions.

The second trend has been the dominant note in recent literature, art, and music, with their emphasis on the communication of inner experience and on emotional, physical, and intellectual expressionism rather than on reason with an ordered sequence of acts, sensations, and thoughts. With this emphasis on the destructive element, on the meaninglessness and irrationalism of the universe, the artist, the poet, the

novelist, the musician is out to shock, to attack all traditions, conventions, and customs, and by a blaze of color, by a continued staccato, by language that shrieks, to demand attention either to his work or to the ills of humanity. I. A. Richards has summed up this mood as "a sense of desolation, of uncertainty, of futility, of the groundlessness of aspirations, of the variety of endeavour, and a thirst for life-giving water, which seems suddenly to have failed." In this mood there is something of Euripidean irony, but without a *deus ex machina* to solve the difficulties, or of the invectives of the prophets, but without their hopes for salvation in a return to God.

The youngest of the sciences, psychology, which seeks to discover the rationale of human behavior, has not yet emerged from the mechanistic stage, and even the so-called organismic psychology, which, in its distrust of mere connectionism, seeks to find an answer in the theory of holism or of the individual operating as a whole through interaction with his environment, is still mechanistic because of its narrow, materialistic interpretation of environment and experience. It is obvious that the latest developments in psychology, in so far as attention is directed to the influences on behavior of other factors than what used to be described as mind, are important, but there is latent in them a tendency to exaggerate the influence of non-intellectual forces and, to that extent, to subordinate the development of intelligence to emotional drives, whether conscious or subconscious, and to sacrifice

the rational to the irrational. This tendency had already manifested itself in literature and the arts; it is gradually beginning to affect educational theory and practice. The claim that there is anything new in this struggle between reason, will, and appetites can be made only by those who have forgotten that the earliest contribution to the philosophy of education was based upon it. A study of Plato's *Republic* should have put educators on their guard against some of the extravagances of the modern claim.

The undermining of authority, the growing insecurity and uncertainty, and in particular the loss of faith in any established values have also affected social and political life. The nineteenth century was one of hope for the gradual emancipation and perfectibility of man. And yet that very liberalism which sought to educate the masses, to give them a share in the benefits of liberal democracy, of science, of art, of civilization and culture, to elevate and enlighten man as an individual, and to place political responsibility upon him has in the long run been defeated by the inadequacy of the education which was provided, and by a confusion of freedom with license. A hundred years ago and more the hopes of representative government lay in the dissemination of literacy. "Promote then," said George Washington, in his *Farewell Address*, "as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of government gives force to public opinion, it is essential that public

opinion be enlightened." "Open a school and close a jail," said the leaders of the movement to establish compulsory education in France, England, and the United States; and in England the extension of the suffrage in 1867 was accompanied by the recognition that "we must educate our masters."

But literacy is a two-edged sword; carried far enough it is the foundation of enlightenment; limited and restricted as the concept was in the nineteenth century it soon began to be utilized as an instrument for propaganda, readily seized upon by demagogues and a cheap press. Literacy made possible the rise of the common man, but it also exposed him to the wiles of those who knew how to use all the methods of playing upon the feelings and emotions at the expense of appeals to reason. Instead of cultivating intelligence, discrimination, and judgment, an education limited to literacy developed an illusion of knowledge and power. Beneficiary of the material advances and comforts of civilization, the common man was unable, because of an inadequate and tenuous education, to enter into the spirit of the new culture; heir to a freedom which it had taken centuries of struggle to attain, he failed to understand that freedom has its correlative in the acceptance of ideals of duty and responsibility. Assailed on all sides by new sensations, which crowded in on each other in a ceaseless stream as science and inventions produced new devices for his comfort and enjoyment, he was impressed more with the unbounded possibili-

ties of progress than with its meanings for humanity. This attitude was already to be noted in the United States a century ago, and the change between the old and new is summarized by Professor Carl Russell Fish in the succinct statement that "whereas Washington devoted his attention to bringing his gardens to an exquisite perfection, the men of the 'thirties and 'forties sought novelty rather than perfection." (*The Rise of the Common Man*, p. 105.) The same change was to take place later in the rest of the world.

As the bonds of authority and tradition were loosened, as faith declined, as ideals and standards of conduct and taste became confused even in the minds of leaders, the common man, in turn, had nothing to fortify him against the bombardment of new sensations, and, without a sense of any categorical imperative, the individual became the measure of all things. The growing contempt for intellectualism and the constant gibes at culture or the Genteel Tradition as the marks of bourgeois liberalism compelled the intellectual to seek the approval of the masses on their own terms—the highbrow disguised himself as a lowbrow in order to keep abreast of the times. In the end it looks almost as though the desire to disseminate culture has resulted in spreading only a thin veneer, somewhat on the analogy of the old wage-fund theory. Hence an illusion of knowledge and an illusion of power without any penetrating influence upon character or enlightenment, and on these illusions each man claims the right to philoso-

phize. Rationalization has taken the place of reason and emotions have usurped the position of intelligence, and as a result of both the emphasis has been placed upon the satisfaction of rights rather than upon the assumption of obligations. And yet the individual by a paradox is mistrustful of himself and prefers the contagious enthusiasm and strength of mass action in his work and in his recreation, a preference which is too frequently turned to their own advantage, in democracies as well as in totalitarian states, by those who understand the mass mind.

Nowhere has this unforeseen result of liberalism been better described than in Ortega y Gasset's *Revolt of the Masses* (p. 107): "The new social fact here analyzed is this: European history reveals itself, for the first time, as handed over to the decisions of the ordinary man as such. Or to turn it into the active voice: the ordinary man, hitherto guided by others, has resolved to govern the world himself. This decision to advance to the social foreground has been brought about in him automatically, when the new type of man he represents had barely arrived at maturity. If from the viewpoint of what concerns public life, the psychological structure of this new type of mass-man be studied, what we find is as follows: (1) An inborn, root-impression that life is easy, plentiful, without any grave limitations; consequently, each average man finds within himself a sensation of power and triumph which, (2) invites him to stand up for himself as he is, to look upon

his moral and intellectual endowment as excellent, complete. This contentment with himself leads him to shut himself off from any external court of appeal; not to listen, not to submit his opinions to judgment, not to consider others' existence. His intimate feeling of power urges him always to exercise predominance. He will act then as if he and his like were the only beings existing in the world; and, consequently, (3) will intervene in all matters, imposing his own vulgar views without respect or regard for others, without limit or reserve, that is to say, in accordance with a system of 'direct action.'"

While the masses have revolted, those who might have led them have retreated into their ivory towers, within which they create a world of their own and fail to see it whole. Each one seeks to cultivate his own garden and ignores the implications of his product for the rest of the world. To quote Ortega y Gasset again (p. 125): "The most immediate result of this *unbalanced* specialization has been that to-day, when there are more 'scientists' than ever, there are much less 'cultured' men than, for example, about 1750. And the worst is that with these turnspits of science not even the real progress of science itself is assured. For science needs from time to time, as a necessary regulator of its own advance, a labour of reconstitution, and, as I have said, this demands an effort towards unification, which grows more and more difficult, involving, as it does, ever-vaster regions of the world of knowledge."



It is out of conditions such as these that the challenge to democratic institutions has arisen. And it is conditions such as these that have played into the hands of dictatorships and made possible the emergence of the totalitarian states. With a thorough understanding of the mass mind, they have stolen some of the thunder of liberalism; putting every individual into a uniform, they have given him the illusion of equality; glorifying the state or the person of the dictator, they have deluded him with a distorted notion of freedom; realizing the economic causes of unrest, they have lured him on with promises of unbounded satisfaction of his wants; herding him into mass formations and bemusing him with rituals, they have given him confidence in his collective strength and grandeur. Propaganda has been substituted for education and the cult of intelligence has been replaced by a constant play on the emotions, for, despite Lincoln, dictators believe that all the people can be fooled all of the time. Nor has the intellectual been allowed to escape the net of *Gleichschaltung*, or totalitarian control. Universities have ceased to be protected centers for the advancement of learning, academic freedom is derided as absolute nonsense, and *Wissenschaft* must be dominated and guided by and for the demands of national life and not by the principles of scientific purity.

Despite this challenge democracies have gone to sleep, sublimely confident that tomorrow will be as today, and forgetting that eternal vigilance is the



price of liberty. There are few who have realized, to quote from a recent address of the president of the English Board of Education, that "democracy will not survive because we make speeches about it; we must see that we make it work." If the totalitarian states appear to be successful for the time being it is because they have restored faith and hope in something in place of despair, order in place of chaos, common ideologies in place of individual caprice. Their success does not, however, invalidate the value and meaning of liberalism and democracy as those ideals which man throughout his history has struggled to attain. It does not need the wisdom of an Aristotle to see how the conditions which have been summarized as the destructive element have served as the easy way of transition from liberalism to statism, from democracy to totalitarianism. It is sometimes claimed by the supporters of totalitarianism that democratic institutions have failed: the fact is that those countries which have adopted one of the various forms of dictatorships either have never tried the democratic form of government or have not realized that democratic ideals and the democratic way of life cannot be acquired by a mere change of constitution; they can emerge only from traditional habituations. The challenge is, however, a real one, and the charges that democracies, based on liberalism, have been built up on a doctrine of noninterference, and have stressed the rights of the individual rather than his duties constitute a real challenge. It is for those who

still have faith in the democratic institutions, and especially for those on whom falls the duty of inducting new generations into them, to investigate these charges and to discover whether there is not in the ideals of democracy the moral equivalent of totalitarian ideologies. Dictators constantly call upon their people to die for their countries; the liberal may well consider whether there are not in democratic institutions ideals for which one should live and which one should seek to make living.

Paradoxically science, which produced the destructive element, was the first to look for a way out. Physics, which had stressed the interplay of mechanistic forces as an explanation of a deterministic world, slowly began to surrender claim to a final answer and to admit the possibility of ultimate values beyond the mechanistic. What was at one time regarded as a deterministic, irrational universe has become a universe under the guidance of some purpose. The materialistic view is yielding to a spiritual interpretation; the idea of continuity of the universe is giving place to the idea of discontinuity; the attempt to reconcile science and philosophy is the attempt to reconcile determinism and freedom. Science, which destroyed older patterns, is itself creating new values or restoring the old. Science, which gave power, destroyed happiness, produced spiritual insecurity and uncertainty, is itself stimulating anew the quest for the meaning of life and for an escape from the implications of a mechanistic universe.

Since education cannot isolate itself from the influences of contemporary culture, it has been under conditions such as those described up to this point that the ferment has been taking place since the opening of the present century. There was, it is true, a prelude of a decade when all the leading countries of the world—England, Germany, France, and the United States—were beset by unrest in secondary education. That unrest was concerned, however, not with the fabric of education in general, but with the somewhat technical problem of the equivalence of traditional and modern subjects—the place to be assigned to the sciences or to modern languages, and the problem whether the study of these should be recognized for admission to the universities. The ferment which has been proceeding now for over a quarter of a century is far more intense and comprehensive than this technical unrest; there is scarcely any aspect or level of education which has not been affected by it. The only parallel in the history of education which seems to resemble the current trend is to be found in the period of the sophists at Athens; possibly another Aristophanes may some day arise to dress the *Clouds* in modern garb. The certainty of the nineteenth century with its faith in literacy for the masses and a traditional culture for the few and with its preoccupation with methods has disappeared.

The protest against traditional theories and practices seems to have broken out in different parts of the world almost simultaneously and yet independently.

It was not at first dominated so much by a common philosophy as by a feeling of the inadequacy of current education. Thus, in England the cessation of the system of payment by results paved the way for a reconsideration of the meaning of elementary education; in Germany the foundations for a new educational theory were laid in the revolt of youth, which began in Berlin in 1899, against the severe intellectualism of the secondary school; only in the United States was the attack on traditional practices launched, before the close of the nineteenth century, with a philosophical criticism of the Herbartian doctrine of interest. An important contribution was made to the movement of protest by the more detailed, even though still unscientific, study of child development which pointed the contrast between the child's interests and what was described as the artificial atmosphere of the classroom.

The criticisms of the traditional schools everywhere follow certain common patterns. The child attends school under compulsion and is kept under disciplinary control until the close of the school day and then "explodes" into freedom. The equipment of the classroom, with its long, orderly rows of desks, is designed in the interests of such control and in order to emphasize obedience to authority. Instruction is planned essentially for passive learning rather than to stimulate independent work and activity, while the curriculum, shaped by adult needs, is distasteful to the pupils and foreign to their interests. If

it is objected that schoolwork is meaningless to the pupils, the justification is offered that education is a preparation for life, that the real values are deferred, and that the pupils will come later to understand and appreciate them. The methods of instruction consist mainly of formal drill and the memorization of content logically arranged and without meaning to the learners. The pupils accumulate facts and information uncritically and without question; learning is passive. From the social and moral points of view the emphasis is on doctrines which are regarded as sacred and unchanging, and the whole process of education is deliberately designed to maintain the *status quo*. In both the elementary and the secondary schools there is a concentration on the past, on the transmission of the social heritage, to the complete neglect of problems of immediate, contemporary concern. Nor is any attention given to individual differences of abilities in systems designed for mass education. Finally, most of the work of the school is intellectual without any opportunity for development on the emotional side. Education, it is claimed even by those who loudly proclaim its social ends, must be designed to meet the interests of the individual, if not, indeed, to arise out of them; anything else means imposition from above and indoctrination, which in turn lead, according to a theory subsequently incorporated, to repressions, complexes, and the thwarting of the natural process of development, with the resulting effects of frustration.

Education, it is urged, must be life and must be rooted in the interests of the child; the school must become child-centered, providing for the natural flow of activity and spontaneous growth in an environment which stimulates both growth and activity. Because the child is by nature active, as he discovers his own needs for meeting new situations, he will inevitably become creative and in that way reconstruct his own experience. The school must become child-centered, and the child must be permitted to enjoy freedom, subject only to the enjoyment of freedom by the rest of his group; in this way he learns the habits that make group activities possible and so acquires a sense of the importance of co-operation. The teacher's function is to stand by, encourage, advise, and stimulate. In its extreme form this theory is based on the premise that nothing should be fixed in advance, with the further implications that a curriculum planned in advance is an imposition which restricts and delimits the active experience of the learner, that subjects *qua* subjects are meaningless and artificial, that life is not compartmentalized into subjects, and that subjects are merely tools to be used as the activity in which a pupil is engaged demands.

It will have been noted already that these trends in educational theory are analogous to the trends which have been described in literature, art, music, and political and social life. They are the educational counterpart of the disappearance of authority, standards, and ideals in other aspects of human activities.

A philosophy which removed the lid from the universe became the philosophy of education, resting on a mechanistic psychology of interaction between the individual and his environment and borrowing, perhaps unconsciously, from psychoanalysis, whose contribution, important though it may be in general, is for education suggestive only. Since nothing must be imposed on the learner lest it interfere with his free development, the basis of education becomes the disequilibrium of the pupil with his environment, and the pupil's desire to restore the equilibrium; the pupil, in other words, is stimulated to activity by his own felt needs and inner drives, and he learns as he satisfies those needs and gives expression to those drives. Each carves out of the universe that experience which he feels to be satisfying. Reality is that which serves our purposes and, therefore, all activities must serve one's immediate purposes and interests. To set up goals in advance is to prevent adaptation to rapid changes in a changing and precarious universe.

Under such a concept of reality and growth through the pupil's own experience, truth is what one wishes to be true or what works in accordance with one's own interests and needs; truth is that which promotes the attainment of purpose and is, therefore, expedient. Hence, nothing is absolute or ultimate; the good, the true, the beautiful are products only of individual consciousness or desires; knowledge and morality are what best serve our needs. Life as an ongoing process



is experimental; knowledge and morality are instruments developed to promote this process. In the words of one theorist of this school: "The experimentalist believes that any response which is so fixed that it cannot be modified in the light of consequences is a dangerous response to acquire. Such fixed ideas, particularly when charged with emotion, are apt to become enslaving prejudices. He believes it an immoral procedure for adults thus to seek to determine the future thought and conduct of the child. As far as possible, he wants his own most fundamental values, such as faith in the experimental method and regard for the principle of social democracy, so to be accepted that the way is kept open for their further critical examination by each individual. Even the process of criticism is not exempt from further criticism."<sup>1</sup>

Such a theory means that man is only the creature of the dominant forces and impulses of the moment, without any values except those that he chooses to put upon them in the light of no other experience than his own. Such a theory fits in with the theories that seem to have dominated literature, art, and music in the past three or four decades; education becomes a stream of consciousness, events, and activities directed to no other end than the satisfaction of the immediate needs of the learner. Reason, mind, intelligence are dethroned in favor of the emotions

<sup>1</sup> J. L. Childs, *Education and the Philosophy of Experimentalism*, pp. 161 f. (New York, 1931).



and the subconscious. Such irrationalism is the result of skepticism and pessimism founded on psychoanalysis, with its stress on impulses, instincts, and desires as the mainsprings of conduct and thought. An analysis of the professed aims of the new educational theory as defined in nearly two hundred schools in Europe and the United States failed to reveal explicit references to social aims and purposes. The terms which appear most frequently in these definitions are creativeness, pupil activity, individual initiative, pupil freedom, free activity, self-government, self-discipline, self-reliance, self-activity, and self-expression. It would appear almost as though the entrance to Plato's cave had been blocked and pupils were expected to grow by the reflection of their own selves.

This theory of education seems to be characterized, as are similar manifestations in recent literature, art, and music, by a sort of spurious vitalism, or inner drive, without either that intuition or intellect posited by Bergson. This inner drive gives the main impulse to a type of expressionism which is the inner self turned outward without standards, values, or ideals; hence creative activities but without any reference to any external measure of meaning. It is further anti-intellectual in that it subordinates the acquisition of knowledge to satisfaction that comes from active adjustment of the organism and environment through immediate and direct experience; knowledge has value only as it is an instrument growing out

of this need for adjustment. Such a theory would start out with nothing fixed in advance except the pupil as a biological and psychological mechanism, and finishes with nothing fixed.

Education does not, however, take place in a vacuum. The school is an agency established by society to achieve certain ends. These ends will differ according to the form of each society. Totalitarian states have adopted fixed patterns into which the individual is to be molded. Democracies will fail if they attempt to adopt a type of education which ignores any values but those chosen by each individual to suit the needs of the moment. The mystical, irrational notion that freedom is synonymous with the right to follow inner drives ignores both the history and the meaning of freedom.

That freedom is a conquest has been as true of the progress of humanity as it is of the growth of the individual. The whole history of humanity has been—despite aberrations in recent years—the history of the emancipation from external controls and, at the same time, of the ways in which man has learned to control himself. This history has been one of the emancipation of man from servitude to fears—fears of nature, slavery, political tyranny, and external controls and coercion over life. Man's struggle for personal freedom, freedom of movement, freedom of thought and expression, freedom of worship, justice, tolerance, and equality of opportunity has been painfully slow and is not yet ended. But in emerging successfully from

the struggle, man did so by learning that he must accept certain limitations on his freedom, by recognizing his responsibility and duty to others. It was only as man learned to appreciate the moral consequence of his actions that he became free.

What has been true of the history of civilization applies equally to the education of the individual—freedom is not an inherent right (totalitarian states have proved how easily it may be lost) but a privilege to be won. And it is in confusing freedom with noninterference and in failing to stress social and moral obligations adequately that those who have most loudly urged freedom in education have erred. The slogan of self-expression, for example, failed to recognize that the true self can be realized only in and through a social milieu. Hence, the fundamental issue is the extent to which such realization of the self can be free and yet result in a personality enriched through and by a consciousness of social values. Here again the answer will be found in the principle that freedom is a right which, like all other rights, must be won, and that all rights imply a corresponding responsibility in their use, no matter what the field of activity may be.

A free society cannot divest itself of the obligation of handing on to new generations those common traditions, loyalties, and interests which make community life possible, but it can and should avoid that claim to omniscience and infallibility which must in the long run spell stagnation and failure to permit

adaptation to changing conditions. If this is accepted, then the only thing that a free society should indoctrinate is faith in freedom and in free inquiry. But the essence of freedom and free inquiry is the recognition of responsibility. Not until the concept of responsibility is incorporated in the discussion of education in a free society, can education be expected to make its rightful contribution to a troubled world. For such a discussion Santayana's description of English liberty may well furnish the text, for in it may be found the answer of a free society to the criticisms of the totalitarian: "It moves by a series of checks, mutual concessions, and limited satisfactions; it counts on chivalry, sportsmanship, brotherly love, and on that rarest and least lucrative of virtues, fair-mindedness; it is a broad-based, stupid, blind adventure, groping towards an unknown goal."

And this, in essence, is the definition of liberal education, which has unfortunately acquired a connotation in terms of familiarity with certain subjects. But a liberal education implies more than a knowledge of classical or modern languages, science and mathematics. It implies breadth of interests, knowledge and information, standards of taste and appreciation, and the possession of certain moral and social qualities. It should result in tolerance and open-mindedness, in ability to meet new situations because one has knowledge and insight, and in readiness to co-operate because of a refined sense of responsibility. All these are social values, values which

make the existence of a free society possible and which cannot be acquired incidentally as and when the pupil feels the need of them.

It may be objected that all this has been tried and that we have failed. The objection is not valid, for it is open to question whether the failure has not been due to excessive emphasis upon subjects as subjects rather than as samples of human experience directed to the achievement of common ends, or upon the same subjects for all without adequate differentiation according to individual capacities. At one time a liberal curriculum was defined in terms of a limited number of subjects; the task today is to discover the right education for the right pupil under the right teacher. And the discovery of the right education is a professional responsibility which, properly considered, gives real meaning to the preparation of the teacher. Thus, the conflict which has been the subject of this discussion cannot be resolved merely by pitting one theory, one method, or one type of curriculum against another, but by realizing that it is none of these but the teacher upon whom the success of instruction and education depends. And if it is the teacher who is to serve as an interpreter of social meanings and values to the immature, and if his efforts are to be directed to the development of free personality, then it is as important to provide the right kind of professional preparation for the teacher as for the future member of any other profession. Education does not thrive amidst the

strife of tongues—the German Republic and the early experiments of the Soviet Republics furnish ample proof of this. And if a free society is to accept the challenge and meet the charges of totalitarianism it will be only as it realizes that there must be common agreement, common social faith, and common values as a foundation for that freedom upon which it is based. It is upon these common elements, consciously and deliberately recognized and defined, that education can build a free personality. To set up the child as an idol and to worship his inner drives, urges, and impulses is to encourage chaos; to set up the ideal of a free personality implies a vision of social purposes which alone can give meaning to education and save the rising generation from immersion in the destructive element which sees no values in the past, no meaning in the present, and no hope in the future. In this task of defining the meaning of freedom in education the English-speaking peoples can find a field of common endeavor—England with her reverence for traditional values and deliberate and cautious acceptance of change, the United States with her buoyant optimism and preference for change at the cost of traditions, and the Dominions rooted in British traditions but with the vigor and vision of youthful pioneers. Democratic institutions may safely be entrusted to them, but only as these nations become conscious of the significance of these institutions for humanity and the part to be played by education in their preservation.

## II. The Educational Situation

THE progress of education is marked throughout the world today by an unrest without parallel in its history. Ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and practices which but a short while ago were taken for granted as settled for all time are being questioned, criticized, and modified. The world is being divided by conflicts on theories of government. The economic situation is thrown out of balance and nothing is settled except that more can be produced and be more equitably distributed with less labor—and with, consequently, more hours left for the enjoyment of leisure. Through rapidly multiplying inventions the size of the world is shrinking, and what happens in one part may be heard and enjoyed almost simultaneously many thousands of miles away. All these changes are beginning to make greater demands upon the understanding and intelligence of each individual in a world which is growing at once smaller and more complex.

The outlook for education is inevitably being changed by these forces, and everywhere education is in a stage of transition. Education has always been affected by changing circumstances and conditions, but in our day it is not only the most advanced but also the most backward cultures that are being af-



fect. And out of this ferment somewhat the same principles seem to be emerging everywhere.

It will help to an understanding of the present situation if we recall, however briefly, the main characteristics which marked the traditional systems of education. Throughout the history of education, wherever man established schools, the primary purpose has been to reproduce the type, to transmit the social heritage, and to adjust the individual to the society in which he lived by helping him to assimilate a certain body of facts, skills, information, and knowledge. Differences in environment and culture were, however, often neglected, and differences in the interests and capacities of individuals were ignored. Instruction based on a false psychology of learning was hammered home by harsh discipline.

This tendency to ignore both the environment and the capacities of the learner is still expressed by the statement of the aim of elementary education in France—that the function of the school is to teach those things of which no adult should be ignorant. And this practice, developed in the mother countries, has been carried over into colonial dependencies with an emphasis upon assimilation of the native to a culture not his own rather than upon adaptation to the environment and culture in which he lives.

Values in education changed from time to time, but aims, content, and methods remained the same. Thus, the earliest aim was religious, with sanctions which were divine as well as social, but which did not neces-



sarily mitigate the disciplinary emphasis. In the provision of schools first established by religious organizations, the state just about a hundred years ago entered into partnership on the theory that no nation can exist without a body of literate citizens; all hope for security and stability was based on literacy, and the call that was used to urge people to support schools was that education would raise not only intellectual but moral standards. Ability to read and write was to make men not only literate but also good. On the theory that knowledge is virtue and knowledge is power, a great deal of stress was placed upon the accumulation by rote memory of all kinds of facts and information, whether they had meaning for the pupil or not. Knowledge was divided and parceled out in grades or standards ranging from the simple to the complex or from the concrete to the abstract. And the accumulated results were tested by examinations.

The result of these three aims was a curriculum consisting of the three R's and religious instruction. It was not until Herbert Spencer raised the question, "What knowledge is of most worth?" that any attention began to be given to the value and meaning of the content. Gradually the curriculum was enriched by the addition of history and geography, nature study and science, drawing, manual and domestic arts, and physical training. But all this was done by accretion; the individual and his environment still continued to be ignored; and the psychology of mental discipline was still used as a justification for

methods of instruction as well as methods of learning.

The curriculum became overcrowded. Some important contributions to lightening the burden of content by correlation and by simplifying the methods through appeal to interest were made by Herbart. But a much more radical change came when the traditional psychology of faculties and mental discipline was attacked. It was soon discovered that a pupil learns best those things that have real meaning for him and at the same time have genuine social and cultural value.

Gradually the curriculum was weeded out. In arithmetic calculations and exercises which the pupil would never use were eliminated. In English grammatical details were reduced to the essentials of everyday use. In history the long lists of dates and in geography the long lists of place names to be committed to memory were dropped in favor of increased understanding. The approach to the question still continued, however, to be made through the subjects, with a tendency to make them more meaningful, more interesting, and more intelligible to the pupil.

The next stage, the stage in which we find ourselves today, has come as a result of a number of influences, but primarily through a fuller understanding of the following aspects of education and instruction:

1. The progress of child psychology produced a better understanding of the process of development of interests in the child.
2. The study of the psychology of learning em-

phasized the importance of active participation on the part of the pupil because he has an interest and a purpose, and displaced the traditional stress on memorization and storing-away of information.

3. Individual differences in capacity and ability were carefully studied and measured, and with them differences in rates of progress began to be recognized.

4. Partly through general social changes and partly through the study of child psychology a change began to take place in the attitude toward discipline, and the emphasis shifted from imposition of external authority reinforced by corporal punishment to gradual training in self-control and self-discipline.

5. Greater attention began to be given to the cultural environment of the pupils and the necessity of making that, as well as the pupils' interests, the starting point in education.

6. Finally, it was realized that education is more than intellectual training—that physical, moral, and aesthetic training is equally important for the education of the whole man.

It is at this point that conflicts arose in interpreting the new, or progressive, education:

1. One group, recognizing the importance of starting with the child, would build the whole curriculum on his growing interests, experiences, and activities as they arise out of his environment. This group is responsible for the so-called child-centered school, built on the theory that education is life and not a preparation for life. According to this group, what

used to be regarded as important in the traditional system can be learned incidentally without the sacrifice of time and without drill and rote learning; more important than the acquisition of tools and skills is the training in self-expression and the art of living.

2. The other group would also start with the interests and firsthand experiences of the child but would make these over gradually into the great body of experiences of the human mind which are organized as subjects. Subjects are, after all, tools, skills, and attitudes developed out of the experiences of the ages for man's survival, perpetuation, and growth. Education in the school sense is not life but the acquisition of those experiences and activities which society regards as essential for its survival and which give meaning to life. Since not all firsthand experiences are desirable, the school and the teacher must select those that are valuable for the individual and for society. Furthermore, a real education cannot be achieved through firsthand experience alone.

Nevertheless, a very important change has taken place in current educational theory. This may be illustrated by the latest edition of a publication of the English Board of Education, *Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers*, which appeared in 1937. Early in this book the statement is made that there has taken place "a shift of emphasis in teaching from the subject to the child." Such a shift had, of course, begun some years earlier in the United States in the movement for child-centered schools.

This means a change in the conception of the place of the teacher, with an emphasis not on routine but on resourcefulness and enterprise, understanding and versatility, and appreciation of the principles of child development and of individual differences as well as of the social aims and purposes of education. The teacher becomes the mediator between the pupil and his culture. Hence, there must result a change in the aims of education from accumulation of facts, information, and knowledge to the cultivation of interests, objective judgment, appreciation of standards of right and wrong, readiness to work and to co-operate with others, and training in the art of living.

As defined in the *Suggestions* the functions of the school are as follows: "(1) to provide the right kind of environment which is best suited to individual and social development; (2) to stimulate and guide healthy growth in this environment; (3) to enable children to acquire the habits, skills, knowledge, interests, and attitudes of mind which they will need for living a full and useful life; and (4) to set standards of behavior, effort, and attainment, by which they can measure their own conduct."

Hence the central problem of an education based upon experience is to select the kind of present experiences that live fruitfully and creatively in subsequent experiences.<sup>1</sup> The American student is already

<sup>1</sup> See Boyd H. Bode, *Progressive Education at the Crossroads*, # p. 42 (New York, 1938), and John Dewey, *Experience and Education*, pp. 16 f. (New York, 1938).

familiar with the theory upon which this definition of the functions of the school is based. Thus Professor Boyd H. Bode has stated that "all learning is a matter of making over experiences in terms of what we can do with things and situations or in terms of what they will do to us"; and Professor John Dewey put the same idea in another way when he wrote that "It is his [the educator's] business to arrange for the kind of experiences, which, while they do not repel the student, but rather engage his activities, are, nevertheless, more than immediately enjoyable since they promote having desirable future experiences. . . ."

To summarize briefly, the following have been the stages of educational development: (1) Centuries of tradition stressed the transmission to all alike of a certain body of essential facts, information, and knowledge. (2) This was followed by a reaction swinging from subjects as such to the interests of the child. (3) More sensible and more justifiable, since society establishes schools to promote certain definite social ends, is the position that the child is educated in, through, and for an environment and culture in which he lives.

The needs and demands of the environment as well as the interests and capacities of the pupils must, therefore, be taken into consideration. Education thus becomes the process of inducting pupils intelligently into the environment in which they are to live and to whose welfare they should be trained to contribute.

What, then, are the needs and demands of any environment? They are: (1) health education in the interests both of the individual and the community; (2) better habits of living in the home and at work, habits which utilize the resources of the community; (3) intelligent understanding of the environment and the influences that have played and continue to play upon it; and (4) sound habits of recreation and use of leisure. Physical, spiritual, aesthetic, and intellectual aims must be the ends of education—sound physical development, mental growth and development of intellectual interests, appreciation of art and music, and the guidance of life by loyalty to some faith and ideals.

The function of the school thus becomes broader, richer, and fuller. It is no longer concerned merely with intellectual training alone, but is also responsible for the development of the emotions and, through both, for the formation of character. It seeks to provide for the self-realization of the pupil through a variety of activities which are not limited to learning from books but include modes of expression through the physical, aesthetic, and practical arts. There is also another justification for the new point of view, and that is the growing complexity of modern society. When society was simple the school took over those forms of instruction which could not be given in the home—essentially instruction in literacy through books; the other forms of activity were provided in the family or by the social group, where the children

learned arts of a practical nature by a sort of apprenticeship to their elders. This apprenticeship is disappearing; the school takes on the duty of providing what are called the residual functions of society, and assumes the task of co-operating with the home and society in developing a whole personality. In doing so the school has come to recognize that a humane education is not one which is acquired through books alone.

These demands furnish the bases of the new education properly conceived. This education starts with the concept that the pupil is not a passive being to be molded to a pattern, but an active person with tendencies to grow and develop through his cultural environment into a human being. The studies in which the pupil engages must have meaning and vitality for him. The child is not an isolated human being but a part of an environment which gradually expands from his small world in his home to the larger world around him. His first interests are in his immediate, personal experiences, and the function of the school should be to start with these interests and the activities which they stimulate and gradually expand them as far as possible by firsthand experiences and then by vicarious experiences, by means of books and other devices. In other words, the constant task of the school is, in the phrase of Sir Michael Sadler, to give the pupil new things to love and admire, but always with the knowledge that the pupil



must be an active and not a passive participant in the process of learning.

This process does not mean that the activities and experiences in which the pupil engages are ends in themselves, but that they constitute the method for acquiring knowledge that will serve present and future needs and help to develop attitudes and ideals which are the bases of character formation. Nor does this process mean that there is no place for subject organization in the timetable, but it does suggest that this organization should grow slowly out of a fund of activities and experiences at the earlier stages. It is this fact, that the school must be directed to the achievement of certain ends and purposes adapted to the development of the pupils and the cultural environment in which they live, which renders unjustifiable an organization of the curriculum based on the immediate experiences of the pupils alone.

The immediate experiences of the pupils, those which they enjoy in their daily lives and in their own environment, must, however, be made the starting point in an educational program. What the duty of the teacher is in this question is described as follows in the *Suggestions*: "Some knowledge on the part of the teacher of the out-of-school circumstances and interests of his pupils is very desirable. He should know, if possible, how far these circumstances are affecting the physical development of his pupils, their personal habits and general outlook. It will follow

that the possibilities of utilizing the resources of the home and the neighborhood for school purposes must be an ever-present concern with him. . . . As far as possible the educational resources of the neighborhood—its historical, geographical and scientific possibilities—will naturally be made use of by schools. . . . An interest in remoter things must necessarily be grounded in this kind of activity.”

The new emphasis is indicated in the *Suggestions* in the change in the order of importance attached to the various subjects of the elementary-school curriculum. In the words of the president of the Board of Education: “In 1918 the order was English, arithmetic, science, and so on, with physical training dealt with in the last two pages. Today health and physical education come first, followed by music and practical subjects, and then by intellectual subjects, ending with mathematics. The order, in short, follows the organic development of the child—first, the physical; then, the concrete; finally, the abstract.” While the statement of the stages of development is too rigid, the rearrangement of subjects has much to recommend it. At the same time the claim that in the *Suggestions* there has been a shift in emphasis from the subject to the child needs to be modified to read a shift in emphasis from the subject and the child to the teacher. For, unless a teacher has an understanding of both the subject and the child, he may fall into the practice of overemphasizing the one at the expense of the other. This danger has in fact

been made the central point of attack on progressive education by Professor Bode in his recent book, *Progressive Education at the Crossroads*.

The principles that have been discussed up to this point are beginning to be employed in discussions of secondary education. The secondary school as a whole has been traditionally a preparatory school for higher education. Its curriculum has generally been determined by requirements of matriculation and other examinations. The number of pupils attending secondary schools has everywhere increased; the proportion proceeding to the universities has remained almost the same. The question that is being raised is whether an education designed for a minority is the best for a majority that will leave the secondary school without proceeding further with formal education. Hence, there is a movement, as in England, to separate the requirements for a secondary-school certificate from those for matriculation and to devise curricula that are more flexible and better suited to the needs of the pupils. Sir Cyril Norwood, formerly headmaster of Harrow, has even proposed a curriculum in which the chief emphasis will be placed on English subjects, music, and art. Here again the emphasis is upon the principle of adaptation of curricula to the needs of the pupils and the demands of a modern environment. There are signs everywhere that the traditional concept of secondary education in terms of an academic curriculum is giving place to a new concept of adolescent education—that

it is the function of the school to discover what a pupil can do and help him to do it.<sup>1</sup>

In both elementary and secondary education the teacher assumes a new role. His duty is no longer limited to imparting the dry bones of a prescribed syllabus, but he is called upon to exercise initiative, to display more enterprise, to use his imagination harnessed to common sense, and to show greater resourcefulness and versatility. He must try to understand his pupils and their environment, and to discover how the two can best be adapted to each other.

This does not mean, indeed, that each teacher can go his own way; he must have guidance, and that guidance should come from a broad general education and professional preparation, from an appreciation of the functions with which he is entrusted, from the suggestions and advice of his superiors, from consultation with his colleagues, and from the standards of attainment to be expected from his pupils at various stages in their development. Nor will the good teacher feel bound by one theory rather than another, but, understanding the situation with which he has to deal, he will not throw out without careful consideration what experience has shown to be valuable in the old, any more than he will accept, because it is novel, the latest in the new.

<sup>1</sup> See I. L. Kandel, *Examinations and Their Substitutes in the United States*, Bulletin No. 28 of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (New York, 1937). In France there have recently been organized *classes d'orientation*, or guidance classes, in the secondary schools.

The task before the teacher is not simple; it will make greater demands upon him, but while he will enjoy a greater measure of freedom than before, he must accept the responsibility of producing men and women for the work and leisure of their world with minds well trained and characters well formed, for both are developed not in a vacuum of abstractions but in relation to the environment and culture in which they exist. The most important change that is desirable if teaching is to become a profession is a change of emphasis in teaching from the subject and the child to the teacher, for "as is the teacher, so is the school."

### III. Forces That Determine Education

EDUCATION, it is generally admitted, is everywhere in a process of transition, but even when this is admitted there is a tendency to ignore the forces that determine its character. It is not enough to accept the fact of transition; it is important for those engaged in the profession of teaching to understand, first, the reasons for the transition, and, second, the ways in which the work of the school is affected by them. Increasingly, the relation between the school and the environment is being emphasized, but this relationship is something more penetrating in its effects than is supposed when attention is devoted merely to the reform of the curriculum. Since education is the effect and product of the group culture, all the factors that enter into that group culture must be understood if the function of the school is to be properly appreciated. The group culture changes and makes new demands upon the school, but within that group culture there are certain constant features. The task of the teacher is to discover, in an age such as the present, what are the permanent values and what are the values that are changing.

A great deal of attention is being paid today to the

importance of the early education of children. This is due not, as is supposed, to changes in psychology affected to some extent by the contributions of psychoanalysis. In the present stage of psychoanalysis it may be somewhat premature to build the education of normal children upon theories which are still in conflict. The public or national interest found in most countries in the education of the young child is due in the main to a desire to provide every child, irrespective of his social status, with a healthy start in life; in democratic countries this has been influenced by a desire to equalize opportunities for all; in nondemocratic countries, where the emphasis is more on the direct and immediate interests of the state, the movement is no less strong. In both cases the declining birth rate places a premium on the conservation of the reduced number of children born. To no small degree other factors have also contributed to the increasing provision of educational tutelage for young children; the changing character of the family, urban congestion, and inadequate housing conditions, with women entering wage-earning occupations in larger numbers, tend to throw the burden of caring for young children upon other social agencies. Finally, the recognition that children have already been affected and influenced, physically and mentally, before they are compelled to attend school, has led to a realization of the need of providing for them an environment which for a few hours a day will furnish them with better conditions for their early development. Taken to-

gether, these forces have led to a desire to provide for all young children those conditions that have in the past been enjoyed only by children of the well to do. At the same time, while the changing character of the family imposes the necessity of providing for the educational care of young children, the institutions created to meet these needs have an opportunity, through parents' meetings, to influence the homes from which the children are drawn.

The change in the character of the family, with the gradual decline of the home as an educative influence, places new responsibilities upon the school at all its levels. The school in many countries has already assumed the responsibility of caring for the health of children through medical inspection and treatment as well as through instruction in health and hygiene. With the disappearance of home activities the curriculum has had to be expanded to include instruction in domestic arts and science for girls and manual training for boys; it is increasingly recognizing the importance of providing for recreation of children after school hours and for training in the use of leisure during the school day.

There is still another aspect in the changing relations between parents and children which imposes a new task upon the school. The time when parental authority was unquestioned is gradually passing; the younger generation is beginning to assert its right to freedom. This fact may be accepted without discussing the causes that have produced it. Freedom and



respect for the individuality of the child have become the keynotes of educational theory. The task imposed upon the school is to define its aims; only the extremist would think of freedom as absolute. The school as a social agency must assume the responsibility for developing self-discipline and self-respect as the basis of freedom, for only in this way can the basis for proper social relations, including relations in the home, be laid. In American education the situation here discussed has led to the introduction into the schools of courses in worthy home membership, and the organization, in connection with the schools, of parent-teacher associations. On the other hand, careful studies have shown that the best agent for character formation is still the home. Again, the nature of the school is being affected by conditions outside it but not wholly beyond its control, for if the changed relations between parents and children do exist, they also affect the school, and the school has here another opportunity, through parents' associations, of discovering and correcting causes of maladjustment. The school, in fact, is confronted with duties formerly undertaken by religious institutions—the church and the Sunday school. These are other important agencies that at one time exercised a strong educational influence—which, however, is today declining in many places. But this decline can be attributed as much to the changing character of the home as to changing beliefs.

One could continue and pass beyond the family to

analyze other aspects of the gradually expanding environment which exercises an influence upon the growing child. Such an analysis would serve only to indicate the forces that co-operate with or militate against the influence of the school. In either case the school must take these into account if education is to be considered successfully. The task of the school and of teachers differs from locality to locality according to the differences in the standards of culture in the homes and communities and the degree of interest in education. A knowledge of these differences is essential, and conditions of instruction and school environment must be adapted to meet them. A teacher in a school in which pupils are drawn from what may be presumed to be homes with a high standard of culture has a different task from that of one who teaches in a school with pupils drawn from another milieu. And yet if equality of educational opportunities is to mean anything, the school must seek to equate the conditions. It might be argued, for example, that in the English studies which have shown the unreliability of special-place examinations<sup>1</sup> one factor which may explain the failure of presumably bright pupils is not merely that the curriculum of the secondary school is different from that of the elementary school, but that some pupils may suffer from lack of proper places in which to study at home or lack of books or even lack

<sup>1</sup> An examination taken by pupils at the age of eleven-plus to select those who are to be given an opportunity of transferring from the elementary to the secondary school.

of stimulus and co-operation in the home. The American high schools have sought to equate conditions by the provision of study halls and libraries. That the interest of parents in the educational progress of their children is an important factor is best illustrated in France, where not only parents but also communities in small localities manifest this interest, which may, from one point of view, exercise a harmful effect upon the pupils concerned and, from another, help the school to maintain the quality of the educative process.

There is yet another factor which affects the character of educational organization. As long as social stratification was marked, as it was in the nineteenth century in most countries outside of the United States, the tendency was to provide one type of education for the masses and another for a select few. Such a distinction is difficult to overcome. That it still exists in England despite the tendencies to provide increased opportunities for education is indicated by the recent discussion in *The Schoolmaster* of "Snobbery in Education"; in the German Republic there were many who looked askance at the increasing number of pupils from the so-called lower classes who entered the secondary schools and continued to the universities. Social stratification tends not only to set up barriers to the provision of educational opportunity but to oppose the increasing expenditures which such provision entails. The opposition to the increasing cost of education in the United States has, during

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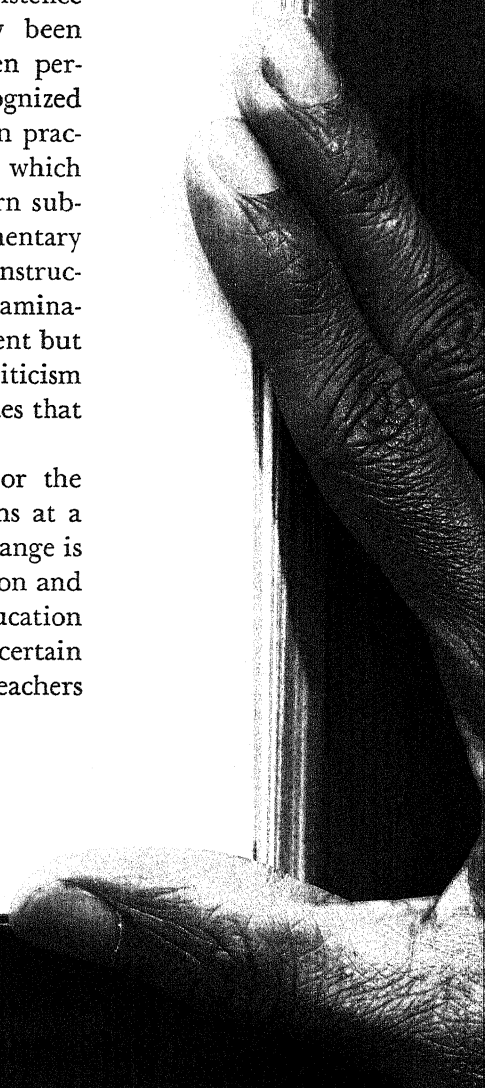
the depression, come in the main from those who already send or can afford to send their children to private schools.

Social stratification has ceased to be a strong force in determining the character of educational provision, not because classes have disappeared but because the importance of such provision has been recognized to be in the interests of each nation. At the same time such stratification set up traditions which are difficult to eradicate, particularly at the levels of secondary and higher education. Because such education was the gateway to professions or preferred types of employment, there has resulted the general acceptance of the notion that a secondary or higher education means, first, emancipation from manual occupations, and, secondly, that it connotes a particular type of curriculum, academic in the main. Such attitudes tend to stand in the way of reforms in the interests both of pupils and of nations.

Hence, in a consideration of the forces that determine the character of an educational system the educational tradition itself cannot be left out of the picture. It is only recently that the school architecture has discarded the traditional type of building which recalled its connection with the church. In the internal reforms which are now proceeding at the primary level, the older generation of parents, public, and teachers is disposed to be critical of any departure from traditional subjects or the relative place of subjects, and the employer is only too ready to deplore

the falling standards in reading, writing, spelling, and arithmetic. In both cases the fact is ignored that the overwhelming emphasis on drill is being replaced by more intelligent instruction which seeks the intelligent co-operation of pupils. And yet the protest is salutary if only it reminds teachers of their responsibility for standards. At the secondary level the great obstacle to the desirable change which is needed because of the increasing numbers of pupils with a wider range of differences in capacity is the persistence of the academic tradition. As has already been pointed out, this academic tradition has been perpetuated from the time when it was the recognized type of education of the ruling classes. It is, in practice, perpetuated by systems of examinations which look askance at the intrusion of new or modern subjects and which, in turn, tend in both elementary and secondary education to affect methods of instruction and selection of content. A system of examinations thus becomes not an educational instrument but a vested interest which will not tolerate any criticism and refuses to recognize merit in any substitutes that may be proposed.

The persistence of educational traditions or the failure to evaluate and modify these traditions at a time when the demands of the environment change is dependent upon the character of the preparation and the status of teachers. As long as formal education was considered merely an affair of imparting a certain amount of subject matter, the training of teachers



was limited to seeing that teachers had a command of such subject matter; in the case of elementary-school teachers this was supplemented by a system of training, which was, in the main, of an apprenticeship character, in the routine of school management and methods of instruction. As the concept of the function of education is being extended and teachers are expected to possess not only a mastery of the subjects to be taught but an understanding of the pupils to be taught and the environment for which they are to be educated, standards of preparation are gradually beginning to be raised and the status of teachers is slowly being brought up to the status of members of other professions. Since the keynote of education is, today, adaptation to the environment, the emphasis is placed more and more upon freedom for the teachers to make this adaptation, if their task is to develop free personalities. Educational traditions are being challenged in theory and practice; what is valuable in these traditions must be retained; what is no longer of significance in the light of changing social conditions must be discarded. If teachers are to enjoy more freedom, it can come only as they become professionally more expert and consequently more responsible in those aspects of education which make for the successful organization of instruction. More and more educational authorities are becoming enlightened and are leaving to the teachers the task of drawing up the courses of study or syllabi of instruction on the basis of their professional prepara-

tion and with such help as they may obtain from suggestions issued by the administrative authorities and officials, from consultation and co-operation with their colleagues, and from continued professional study. The part played in determining the character of the educative process depends to a far greater degree upon the type of preparation received by teachers than is commonly supposed. Here again the teaching body must co-operate with parents and public in order that these may also understand the significance of the departure from those educational traditions with which they are familiar.

Teachers can, of course, never be wholly free; as agents of society or the state they are appointed to secure certain ends on behalf of the public that they serve. The extent to which they are free depends upon the political character of the state. If the individuals in a state are subordinate to its ends, if those ends demand quiescent submission and obedience, then the teachers will be trained directly to provide an education determined by those ends. The administrative system will be organized on hierarchical principles which exclude participation of parents and public and make of the teacher merely a tool to carry out the will of the state. Education under such conditions becomes synonymous with propaganda, and the state ends by exercising a despotism over the bodies and the minds of its subjects.

The situation is reversed when the state is the agent of the individuals who make it up. The state (or

those in control of the government) does not assume omniscience and infallibility. Progress does not depend upon the will of a dictator or a party but upon that of all the citizens. This is the theory of liberal, democratic government—which may be accepted despite the fact that its free operation may be thwarted by custom, by stereotypes, by class and other interests. In such a state the central authority for education may set up standards for the provision of equality of opportunity and the proper conduct of education, but it will refrain from imposing upon teachers and schools its own pattern of education. Local authorities will enjoy freedom, provided they assume responsibility for progressive and comprehensive development of education in their areas; teachers will enjoy freedom, harnessed to a sense of professional and social responsibility, in those aspects of education in which they are professionally qualified. Such an educational system is directed to producing men and women free because they have a sense of social responsibility, intelligent because their power of thinking has been trained, and good citizens because they realize that society depends on open-mindedness, tolerance, fair play, justice, and a readiness to settle political conflicts by discussion and not by violence.

Cutting across all these influences there is still another that affects the character of education. National characteristics or national ways of looking at life, transmitted from generation to generation, cannot be left out of consideration. The conflict between



liberalism and authoritarianism in Germany has resulted in depriving an otherwise intelligent population of its right to self-determination and in the acceptance of control which subjugates the individual to the state. In France changes in the curriculum are always subordinated to the traditional cult of reason and training in ability to think clearly. The English emphasis on character and conduct has for a long time stood in the way of rigorous intellectual training in the schools, while reliance on customary and traditional ways has been a check on the tempo of reform. And in the United States preoccupation with the immediate has led to a tendency to minimize the lessons of tradition and to stress the importance of change.

These and many other forces, such as, for example, the economic status and organization of a country, began, in the nineteenth century, to be subordinated to another dominating force, that of national interest. The rapid and progressive development of national self-consciousness which marked nineteenth-century nationalism is again beginning to reassert itself with increasing vigor. The world is divided between two concepts of nationalism, the one totalitarian, the other pluralistic. In the first, national culture is dominated by an ideology which cannot be questioned; in the second, national culture is the expression of the free and spontaneous interaction of individuals and groups. In either case nationalism is a condition of mind, or loyalty to certain ideas, ideals, and culture, in the broadest sense of the term. How that national

culture is defined, together with the concept of the state, determines the character of those forces that determine education. All these forces a philosophy of education must take into consideration, for education cannot be autonomous or remain aloof from the environment which it serves, without becoming formal and sterile. The development of education as a science may be possible, but only in a very limited sense. Not only do the forces that affect education defy scientific control, but the human element is too complex and human relations are too involved and complicated to be as easily defined and measured for educational purposes as some enthusiastic advocates of a science of education would claim. The choice today is, indeed, between a type of education which subordinates human intelligence to a will beyond its control and a type of education which seeks to release the intelligence of individuals to understand and cope with the problems of the modern world.

#### IV. School and Society

THE problem of the relation of school and society is one of the oldest in the history of education and, instead of becoming simpler, becomes increasingly more complex as society itself grows more complex. As long as each family or each group or each church or each trade assumed the responsibility for the education of its members, education could be adapted to the immediate cultural needs, spiritual or secular, of each. But as families merged into tribes and tribes into groups and as societies became larger and more self-conscious entities and as, later, they began to be organized as nations and nations developed central agencies of government, education began to be provided and controlled by the state. No matter how enlightened state action may be, it cannot resist the temptation to standardize, whether in the interests of conformism or of efficiency or of both. The result is that an agency established to provide the means undertakes to prescribe the ends of education. The next consequence is that all distinctions among group culture, national culture, and a state-dominated culture disappear. Hence, the essential problem of school and society becomes the problem of the rela-

tion of the individual to the society of which he is a member.

Education has always been a social process by which the individual becomes initiated into the culture of his group. In the broad sense that all experiences educate or affect an individual this culture educates if the individual is to find his place in society. Within that culture, however, a group or society or the state selects certain aspects which it regards as more essential for its stability and perpetuation than others. Here is to be found the origin of the school as an institution created to perform, in an organized and formal manner, the initiation of the young into the culture of their group.

If the problem is approached from the historical or comparative point of view two distinct functions of schooling may be distinguished.

The first of these is the conservation or transmission of the culture, or social heritage, so that the younger generation may be equipped with the skills and knowledge and attitudes that will enable it to take its place in a society and contribute to that society's stability and preservation. Society through the school seeks to reproduce the type, preserving its culture as a distinctive asset. The school emerges just as soon as the social organization becomes too complex to provide education informally—as, for example, by apprenticeship to public life in Greece and Rome, or later, in industry or by training on the farm or in the home.

As society progresses and as its culture becomes more complex its residual functions are gradually transferred to the school as the formal agency for education, and the school is recognized as the institution through which these functions can be most systematically and economically carried out. Thus, there emerged, first, training in the fundamentals, then the so-called enrichment subjects, practical and domestic arts, health education, moral and social training, physical education, and vocational training. The school thus became a social institution created to carry out certain social purposes—conservation and transmission.

The second function of education emerged later when provision was made for the preparation of some individuals to become potential leaders of society or, as Professor Hocking of Harvard University puts it, for education for growth beyond the type. Some attempt was made here to go beyond mere transmission and to develop a critical attitude, freedom, and intelligence to modify and adapt social conditions to new needs. Examples of the second function may be found in the education system of Athens, in the period of the Renaissance, and in secondary and higher education in most countries during the nineteenth century.

The fundamental issue in education today is the emphasis that shall be placed upon these two functions. The issue, in a word, is between new forms of despotism and tyranny, on the one hand, and democ-

racy, on the other—whether man shall be enslaved in the interests of reaction or whether he shall retain the hard-won gains in his upward struggle for emancipation and enlightenment.

The problem of school and society is again the problem of the relation between the state and the individual. It is not a new problem; it was already recognized by Plato and Aristotle when they laid down the axiom that the nature of the state determines the character of its education. Plato stated that "if young men have been and are well brought up, then all things go swimmingly" in the state, and Aristotle made the same point when he wrote that political stability depends upon "the adaptation of education to the form of government." The same principles emerged later when the national state began to provide and to control education, and were enunciated in two forms: "As is the state, so is the school," and "Whoever controls the child, controls the future." These were the principles upon which Frederick the Great established the educational system of Prussia and Napoleon that of France; in both cases the state claimed the paramount right to mold the minds of its subjects to a particular pattern. It was the fear that state action would, in education, produce such a result that for so long stood in the way of interference by the state in England, and when Washington and his contemporaries urged upon the American people the necessity of providing education they stressed the fact that the permanence of

democratic government depends upon the freedom and enlightenment of its citizens.

The essential differences among the educational systems of the world today are to be found in this conflict between molding youth to a pattern and developing free intelligence. On the one side are dictatorships or totalitarian states; on the other are those states which have retained their faith in the ideals of democracy. In the one group the individual is sacrificed to the state, which stands above all individuals; in the other the state is still considered to rest upon the expressed will of the individuals who make it up. In one group are to be found Russia, Germany, Italy, the Balkan States, Turkey, and Japan; in the other, the Scandinavian countries, Holland, Belgium, France, Great Britain and the British Dominions, and the United States.

The totalitarian states have by far the simpler task in education, for everything is determined by and referred to the accepted ideology, to which all individuals must conform either through coercion or through a type of education which is indistinguishable from propaganda. The totalitarian state "is the national condition in which every human being thinks and acts in a way co-ordinated with the thoughts and acts of every other human being." In the words of the German Minister for Propaganda, "Anyone may grumble or criticize the government if he is not afraid to go to a concentration camp," and according to Mussolini, "Everything must be for the

state, nothing outside the state, nothing against the state." With a philosophy as clear-cut and definite as this, the task of education is simple, for, as Fichte said, "truth in reality is what you wish to be true; false is what you wish to be false," so that "discussion affecting the existence of the party or the nation must cease altogether." So André Gide in his *Return from the U.S.S.R.* reports that he found everywhere credulity, submissiveness, docility, and conformism. It is not Japan alone that has established a Bureau of Thought Supervision to "drive home to the minds of students the true import of the Japanese spirit, while at the same time giving them fair and sound knowledge."

Here we find a return to the earliest and most primitive form of education; the school exists merely for the conservation and perpetuation of the existing form of society. Culture in all its aspects—religious as well as secular, intellectual as well as aesthetic—is under the control of the state, which sets up the standards and prohibits any manifestation of the free spirit. The right of the state is supreme and all-pervasive and even academic freedom in the university—the one small corner preserved in the older authoritarian state for the cult of intelligence—is now described as absolute nonsense and is banned. School and society are one and there is no break in gauge between them.

The democratic state, by contrast, is founded upon the rights of the individual to freedom of thought, freedom of expression, and freedom to live his own



life in accordance with his own judgment so long as he does not trespass upon the enjoyment of similar rights by others. The totalitarian state places the emphasis upon duty and unquestioning obedience; the democratic state rests upon the rights of the individual, too frequently without an adequate emphasis upon his responsibilities and obligations. The essential method of education in a totalitarian state is that of indoctrination; in a democratic state there is often, through fear of indoctrination, a failure to impart an understanding of the ideals upon which the common will must be founded. To use the earlier definition of the functions of education, while the totalitarian state stresses conservation and transmission for the reproduction of the type, the democratic state is in danger of neglecting the cultivation of the ideas and ideals that make for social unity, in favor of promoting growth beyond the type.

This weakness of democracies has not been ignored by the apologists for totalitarianism, and every justification of its ideology starts with an attack upon the democratic cult of individualism. The charges brought against the liberal ideal are that it fails to inculcate a consciousness of social solidarity and of the destiny of the state; that the emphasis is more upon the rights than upon the duties of individuals; that the state exists merely as an agency to carry out the will of its citizens, and this will is determined by their selfish interests; that government by discussion, by votes, by majorities, is a delusion which promotes

the interests merely of those for the time being in power; that there is no guidance of national destiny and existence by those who know what is best for the state and at the same time for the individual. The apologists nowhere make any reference to the result of the ideology which they defend, which in Germany is *Verschwiegenheit*. This, Fichte had already anticipated when he wrote about the despot that "he puts the rope around the neck of humanity and says, 'Be quiet! It's all for your good.'" And so, according to a decalogue for Fascist youth, "Mussolini is always right," and Japanese students must refrain "from harboring dangerous thoughts."

The totalitarian concept of the relation of school and society and the charges brought against the liberal ideal constitute a challenge to democracies, whose task must be to develop the moral equivalent of the totalitarian ideologies and to cultivate in their youth as strong a faith in free institutions, what Lord Bryce called "a vehement passion for democracy," as is found for its opposite in the totalitarian societies.

The educational task of totalitarian societies is simple because the goal to be attained is clear and definite. The essence of democratic institutions is that, depending upon the wills of the individuals that make them up, they must be adaptable to changing demands. Democracy is an adventure—it is always experimental; totalitarianism is clear-cut and logical and claims to know no compromises.

Democracies cannot escape the duty of providing

for the dissemination of those ideas and ideals upon which their stability and survival must depend. They too must, through education, provide for the reproduction of the type. But if democracies are an adventure they must at the same time develop and cultivate enlightenment and understanding in their citizens. Nor can they shrink from indoctrination, but that indoctrination should be confined to transmitting faith in the ideals of freedom, a readiness to accept the methods of argument and discussion as the basis of social progress. The difference between a liberal and a dictator is, as Charles A. Beard has said, that the liberal does not claim to be omniscient.

It is quite clear, however, that the democratic ideal of enlightenment has not been carried into our educational practices. The emphasis, on the whole, has been upon conservation and transmission of knowledge rather than development of ideals and attitudes. Elementary education has, in the main, rested upon the transmission of literacy, and the secondary schools have perpetuated a tradition established for societies different from those of the present. In both, the justification of mental training has not yet wholly disappeared, and both branches of education are dominated by the exigencies of examinations, which still stress, as the Roman writer said, "things that are considered important for the school but have no meaning in the forum." And at the secondary level "matriculation" has come to be regarded as the sole end of edu-

cation despite the increase in the enrollments and the fact that few will proceed to the universities.

To provide educational opportunities for all is an essential need in all democracies; equally, to provide an education suited to differences in individual interests and abilities is a change demanded in the interests of justice and educational progress. But what is more urgent, if the phrase "school and society" is to have genuine meaning and validity, is a fresh start in our thinking on curriculum and methods and a more realistic approach to the life which the changes of the last generation have produced. Indeed, the phrase "school and society" might well be changed to "school for society." The school must not be of society but in society.

The strength of totalitarian states rests upon the fact that all education is directed to indoctrinating in their ideals and meanings. Democracies will fail unless they too develop faith and fervor in their ideals and, at the same time, an intelligent understanding of their problems. To reorganize the school system alone, however, is recognized to be inadequate unless the work of the schools is readapted to prepare citizens for the world in which they live and are to grow up. To have a vote in the election of a government, unless that vote is guided by an understanding of the issues involved, is of the essence of futility. To study physics and chemistry may be a good preparation for examinations, but to study science in order to understand the world around us may have

more lasting effects. To learn to speak a foreign language may be a valuable exercise, but to acquire an interest in reading a language in order to comprehend the mind of a people may be more profitable for international understanding. And so one may go from subject to subject and contrast the results of methods directed to preparation for examinations or justified by outmoded psychological theories with the results that might be hoped for not by the adoption of any radical theory but by recalling and revering Seneca's words, *Vitae non scholae discimus*.

The schoolmaster need not fear for standards; traditional reliance on traditional examinations has been so shaken recently that, on educational and technical grounds, substitutes must be found, and those substitutes must center not in the ability of pupils to disgorge examinable knowledge but in the growth of their personalities. And personality can have meaning only in its social setting.

There has been a widespread movement recently for the introduction of social studies or social sciences in the schools. It is a wholesome movement, but it may lead to a neglect of the fact that all studies must be social and part of the culture of a society. Germany has shown recently how such an apparently innocuous subject as simple arithmetic may be made to serve special militaristic ends. There may even be some danger that the introduction of a special subject may defeat the attainment of similar ends through those already in a curriculum.

But before the curriculum is revised it is essential that the purpose of such a revision must be understood. There has recently been formed in England an Association for Education in Citizenship which provides an answer to the challenge of the totalitarian states. This is the counterpart in England of the emphasis which has been placed in the United States on the teaching of the social studies. In its first pamphlet the Association states, "that time seems ripe to form a national body as a meeting ground for those who are advocating increased opportunities for the training for citizenship throughout our educational institutions. Under training for citizenship we include: training in the moral qualities which are necessary for the citizens of a democracy; powers of clear thinking in everyday affairs; and the kinds of knowledge of the modern history, geography, economics, citizenship, or politics."

The chief qualities of the good citizen of a democracy are defined as follows: (1) a sense of social responsibility; (2) a love of truth and freedom; (3) the power of clear thinking in everyday affairs; and (4) a knowledge of the broad political and economic facts of the modern world.

There may be some fear that the teaching of the social sciences will provide an opportunity for injecting bias in the instruction; the fear may be dismissed, for the pupil, coming under the influence of a number of teachers during his school career, will, by the conflict of biases, be ultimately compelled

to reach his own conclusions—a not undesirable end in education.

It is not inappropriate by way of summary to quote from the statement of a former president of the English Board of Education in a foreword to a volume, published by the Association, on *Education for Citizenship in Secondary Schools*. "In the last few years," he wrote, "it has been clearly proved that democracy is by far the most difficult of all forms of government—so difficult that many nations have abandoned it in favor of more primitive forms. The decay of democracy abroad has led many people to the conclusion that, if those democratic institutions which we in this country agree are essential for the full development of the individual, are to be preserved, some systematic training in the duties of citizenship is necessary and indeed such training has long been practised in one form or another. Men and women receive in schools, factories, workshop, and university a vocational training designed to fit them to be useful members of a trade or profession, and in the same way, it is felt, they are in equal need of a more subtle and difficult form of training to enable them to play their parts as useful members of the whole civilized community, which embraces all professions."

Essentially a movement such as this means that the function of the school must be to develop in the future citizen ability to think for himself, to examine statements critically, and to reach a decision for him-

self. This has been a fundamental demand of the so-called movement for free education or activity instruction. The distinction is often made in statements by the advocates of this movement that it is the function of the school to teach pupils not what to think but how to think. There is some danger that, under the movement for free education and training how to think, there may be a tendency to forget that pupils must have the wherewithal to think. Self-expression and creative activity may be desirable, but the individual must have, first, something to express and something with which to create, and that something must be derived from the group or social culture. Instead of self-expression it would be preferable to promote the self-realization of each pupil in accordance with his interests and abilities but directed to the same common goal for all—informed citizenship.

In all the discussions for free education, however, the emphasis has been more upon freedom for the child than freedom for the teacher. There may be implicit in the demand for freedom for the child the notion that it cannot be attained unless the teacher is free. Too frequently, however, administrative regulations and the character of teacher preparation militate against freedom for the teacher. No teacher can be said to be free if he is limited by a prescribed syllabus, prescribed textbooks, inadequate equipment, examinations of an external kind, and even a system of inspection which seeks to assess a teacher's qualities



by one standard while professing other aims of education. But when one demands freedom for the teacher, it must be understood that this means the release of the teacher's abilities to act in accordance with the principles of his professional preparation, his understanding of the pupils and their environment, his co-operation with his colleagues, his mastery of content, and his understanding of the world about him.

Nor is it enough to provide a free environment for teachers; whenever an educational transition is made, it is essential to educate public opinion for it. Unless the gauge between school and society is to be broken, parents and public must also understand what the school is trying to do. Such intimate association between the school and the public is two-edged—it educates the public and in turn secures support for the school. But it does far more—it tends to develop such reciprocal relations between school and society that it encourages a variety and a flexibility which alone can make an educational system progressive.

It is obvious that if these arguments for the relations between school and society are valid—and such is, of course, the democratic, liberal point of view—then the relations between the state and education must change. If the progress of democratic societies is to depend upon the trained intelligence of responsible citizens, the state, as the organized agency of society, must assume the burden of providing facilities

for education, either directly or in co-operation with local governmental authorities. Equality of educational opportunity, which is the essence of a democratic scheme of education, can be provided only through the concerted efforts of society acting through constituted agencies of government. But it does not follow that the provision and support of education by the state must be accompanied by control by the state. If the interests of society are best served by providing for the fullest development of the individual and by the promotion of variety of experience due to variety of abilities, interests, and environments rather than by uniformity, then the task of the state is to create the best machinery for their encouragement, and the concern of the state should be not that all are educated alike according to a common syllabus or a prescribed examination but that all should have equal opportunities for education accessible to them. A democratic society, if it leaves both the provision and the control of education to the state, is just as much in danger as a totalitarian state of establishing a monopoly of education, not only to the exclusion of private schools but to the prevention of experimentation and adaptation to local needs, whether social or individual.

The function of a governmental authority, whether state or local, in education is to provide the means for promoting equality of educational opportunity, for exercising such supervision as will guarantee equality of educational provision, and for creating

such conditions as will enable teachers to do their best work in the school and classroom. For the state to do otherwise would in the end mean that it was seeking to control the free development of social and national culture and to prevent that adaptation to changing demands by which alone a culture can advance.

In order to allay any fears that such a relationship between the state and education would mean a lowering of standards or lessening of efficiency, it must be remembered that the only sure guarantee both of standards and of efficiency rests on the teacher and his professional preparation. If, again, it is inferred that such a system would lead to a type of free education which cultivates unrestrained individualism, it must be borne in mind that one of the essential aspects of the professional preparation of teachers is to cultivate not merely mastery of subject matter to be taught but an understanding of the social meaning of such subject matter and its value in developing the individual as a member of society. There is much talk today of the training of personality, but personality is too often confused with individuality. Individuality is what a person is by his original nature; personality is what he becomes as he acquires his share of the group culture—that is, what he is by virtue of his education.

It is only as a state system of education provides the machinery for the reciprocal interrelations between school and society that both can be invigorated, that

the school can in a genuine way be adapted to cultivate a realistic understanding of the world in which the pupils live and grow up, and that society can advance through the enlightenment, intelligence, and informed citizenship of its members.

## V. Education and Social Change

THE general social and cultural unrest which can be traced back to the beginnings of the modern scientific movement and the consequent technological changes, an unrest which has grown in intensity since the War, has had its repercussions on educational thought. This has, indeed, been the history of education, for education has been most vigorous and vital in periods of great social changes, as, for example, in Athens, during the Renaissance and the Reformation, at the time of the early scientific movement of the seventeenth century, and at the beginning of the nineteenth century following the Industrial Revolution and the consolidation of nation-states. The period through which the world is passing in the present era is probably one of those nodal periods in which old ideas and ideals, standards and loyalties, are being questioned and modified, if not revolutionized. Science is remaking the world and bringing an economic upheaval in its train; political institutions are being questioned or overturned; a war of ideas is going on in every field that concerns human relationships. The conflicts are more profound and more widespread than those which have always ex-

isted between the older and younger generations.

Under these conditions unrest in education is inevitable, but in the discussions on education and social change it is not clear whether a formula is being sought whereby the rising generation shall be acquainted with the social changes going on about it or whether it is proposed that the school itself should be made an instrument for the reconstruction of society. These alternatives can be answered only in the light of the purposes for which society establishes schools.

The earliest and most persistent reason for the establishment of schools as formal agencies of education is the desire on the part of a group, society, or state to conserve and transmit its culture and heritage to the younger generation and to equip this generation with those habits, skills, knowledges, and ideals that will enable it to take its place in a society and contribute to the stability and perpetuation of that society. This purpose is based on faith in the possibilities of formal education during the formative and plastic period of childhood and adolescence. This is the principle in Plato's statement<sup>1</sup> that the effectual functioning of the state depends upon the proper training of the young, and in Aristotle's insistence that the stability of systems of government has its basis in the adaptation of education to the form of government.

Education does not proceed in a vacuum; its char-

<sup>1</sup> See p. 62.

acter is determined by the group culture, and schools are institutions created by society to attain certain specific ends. These ends began to be defined when the national states at the beginning of the nineteenth century undertook to establish systems of education to initiate their future citizens into the national culture. Stability was to be secured by instructing the pupils in the schools in a common language, common history, common government and political ideals, common economic and social ideas and ideals, and common objects of social allegiance in order that there might emerge a common group, or national, self-consciousness. If the younger generation is to enter into meaningful partnership in and responsibility for its heritage the first function of the school is to initiate it into its common culture. Society is, in fact, prior to the individual, and the school is an agency for promoting stability and adapting the individual to the environment in which he lives. Without entering into other considerations which justify the transmission of the social heritage or the experiences of the race as a basis for understanding the present, it will be generally agreed that the function here described has received wide acceptance from the days of Plato down to modern times.

If, however, the school stops with the performance of this function, then a society either stagnates, as was the case in China, or its progress is determined by the will of the few who lead the rest, trained through the school to habits of duty, discipline, quiescent obe-

dience, and uncritical acceptance of authority. The method of such a school is that of direct indoctrination and education becomes indistinguishable from propaganda. This was already the trend in authoritarian states of the last century; it is the principle definitely accepted in the totalitarian states of the present, in which education is directed by and to a common ideology. The social changes wrought by revolutions have produced patterns which know no compromise and are not open to question or criticism. Education has become adjustment to a fixed and unchanging environment, and national culture is something that is colored by a particular ideology and controlled by organizations created to prevent changes in it.

The situation is different in those countries in which culture is accepted as the spontaneous expression of individuals and the free interplay among individuals or groups. It is at this point that education and social change begin to be clothed with meaning and to challenge traditional practices. The procedure in the past was to impart a body of content, knowledge, and information representing selections from the group culture designed primarily to "train the mind." It tended to become stereotyped and formal and rarely came to grips with the present. The school was a cloistered institution which eschewed any contact with the environment into which the pupil was soon to pass. It must be remembered, however, that even this type of procedure did not ignore the chang-



ing environment and was not designed to maintain a static society, but it was conducted with the conviction that a mind trained by "academic" or "scholastic" material would have no difficulty in dealing with the realities of life. Nor was the procedure in the education of the masses differentiated from the procedure in the education of the potential leaders.

These practices were not accepted without protest. Since the days of Seneca educators have urged that education must be for life and not for the school, but it was not until the beginning of the present century that widespread efforts began to be made to bring school and society together. A better understanding of the process of child growth, a new interpretation of the concept of interest, a clearer realization of the meaning of democracy and the part to be played by the individual in it, and the rapid changes in the culture, due in the main to the progress of science—all these forces and many others contributed to the spread of the theory that if education is a social process, it must contribute to an understanding of the society which it serves. The influence of John Dewey's philosophy in bringing about the change of outlook not only in the United States but in other parts of the world is too well known to need further discussion. The vast body of educational literature which has grown up in the United States in the past three decades speaks eloquently of this influence. The educational trend in Germany during the period of the short-lived Republic was rooted in *Boden-*

*ständigkeit*, the relation of education to the environment. In England the latest edition of the *Handbook of Suggestions for Teachers* is inspired by the same principle, as is illustrated by a statement in the general introduction that "we feel more deeply the need of relating what is taught in the schools to what is happening in the world outside."

The new theory of education, in insisting that the work of the school must be related to the environment in which and for which its pupils are being educated, contains in its definition the suggestion that discussions of social change are implicit in the curriculum. It means that pupils should be taught to understand the world in which they live. Up to this point the problem is fairly simple. Difficulties arise, however, when it is suggested that change is the characteristic note of the present world—and change not merely in its material but in its ideational aspects. To what extent should or can the school concern itself with political and economic conflicts, with changes in the attitudes to authority, or with the general atmosphere that questions all traditions?

Changes in the material world are facts; political and economic theories are matters of opinion. If the teacher is an agent of the state, to what extent is he free to introduce controversial issues into the classroom? It is not necessary here to state that the issues should be relevant to the stage of development and the maturity of the pupils concerned and to the subject of instruction. But if the function of educa-

tion is to develop an understanding of the problems of the environment in which the learner lives, the opportunity of discussing controversial issues in the school cannot be ignored. Indeed, one may argue that it is essential to train the pupil in recognizing the importance of accurate knowledge before reaching an opinion.

If the doors of the school are to be closed to the discussion of controversial issues, it might well be asked what the alternative would be; in a period of change the schools would be guilty of turning pupils out into the world ignorant of the problems that will confront them. There is, in fact, no choice but to bring those elements of conflict into the classroom. To adopt an ostrichlike attitude and ignore the existence of such issues, to deny the right to mention even the existence of what may be regarded as subversive ideas, is to follow the old practice of ignoring the existence of sex. Carried to its logical conclusion, such a policy could be used to justify the suppression of a free press and of freedom of opinion, and the arrest of anyone suspected of "harboring dangerous thoughts."

Any reference to the introduction of controversial issues in politics and economics arouses the fear that pupils will be exposed to the bias of the teachers. It may be true that no teacher can successfully conduct a discussion of controversial issues without the pupils' detecting his bias. Nevertheless, pupils pass through the hands of a large number of teachers

during their school careers; to suspect that all teachers have the same bias has no justification in fact; nor are teachers the only educational influences that play upon the growing youth. The choice is whether the rising generation is to receive its political and economic education through informal agencies or through methods that are truly educative; whether the young are to be enlightened and trained through the scientific study of facts or whether they are to be exposed to deliberate propaganda without the support of accurate information on both sides of an issue. If the relationship between school and society or education and the environment means anything, then the schools must, at the appropriate stage, impart the realities of society. And if that society is in process of change, then all that the school can do is to place the pupils in possession of full knowledge of the facts in the issues involved and to give them that training which will enable them to make up their own minds on the basis of that knowledge.

The emphasis in this argument is on training in methods of thinking through issues that are real. There is some truth in the objection that solutions cannot be given to contemporary controversial issues; this objection is, however, not a valid argument for their exclusion from the schools. Neither the issues nor the solutions are likely to be the same when pupils now in school take their places in life as adult citizens; the detailed facts of an issue and the knowledge requisite to its solution will inevitably be dif-

ferent, but unless some training is given in the schools in the patterns of thinking with which a problem is to be approached, the intellectual equipment necessary to recognize even the existence of problems will have been withheld. If democracy depends for its survival upon the intelligence and understanding of the ordinary man, it is the function of the school to equip him in advance with the necessary knowledge and powers of clear thinking to discharge his duties as a citizen.

It is only in this sense that education and social change can be discussed. Education must go beyond its task of imparting a knowledge and appreciation of the common interests, or what Dewey has called the objects of that social allegiance which makes common social understanding and consciousness of group membership possible. It must help men and women to think for themselves, unless they are to succumb to the will of an authority which claims omniscience and infallibility.

There has, however, been injected into discussions of education and social change the suggestion that schools should, in a period of change, educate for a new social order, and that teachers should ally themselves with some political group and use their classrooms to propagate certain doctrines. Schools and teachers should, in other words, participate more directly and vitally in projecting particular ideas or patterns of social change and in their execution. The whole history of education emphasizes the impossi-

bility of this idea, for society establishes schools to provide a firm basis for itself and to sustain the common interest. Schools are a part of the environment which they serve; they are not autonomous or insulated against the social forces and influences around them; nor can teachers on the basis of a guess as to the active forces of the day help to build a new social order. Society changes first and schools follow.

It is, however, becoming increasingly important that teachers should be more alive than they have been in the past and better informed about the environment in and for which they are educating their pupils. Only in this way can they give meaning to the subjects for which they are responsible, for subjects, if they are to have any significance, must be saturated with social meaning. To attempt to instill ready-made ideas on controversial issues or to influence pupils to accept one doctrine rather than another is to adopt the methods of totalitarian states and to confuse education with propaganda.

In a democracy the only acceptable aim in bringing the school and society more closely together is to develop the knowledge and understanding that make for enlightened citizenship. But the acquisition of knowledge, facts, and information about the environment in all those aspects that concern the conduct of the citizen is not the sole end of education; such an acquisition must be made the vehicle for training in scientific methods of thinking and for cultivating free and disciplined minds. To educate for a new

social order is to close the minds of the pupils, for, in a society in transition, no one can have a final answer concerning the issues that are involved. True education would help to put the pupils in a position to appreciate the urgent necessity of acquiring knowledge, to discriminate between facts and prejudices, to weigh and judge evidence, to reach conclusions warranted by the information secured, and to recognize the issues involved in a period of social transition or crisis. If this end is to be achieved, if the aim of education is to develop free and enlightened citizens, then the teachers who are to be entrusted with carrying out this aim must themselves be enlightened and free. The problem, like all other problems in education, becomes one of teacher preparation and of the status of teachers. In the words of a former president of the English Board of Education, "The standards of the teaching profession itself are the only sure protection" against the abuse of the teachers' positions in discussing educational and social change.

The problem of education and social change solves itself if education is defined as the process of bringing pupils to an understanding of the environment in and for which they are being educated. That environment is a constantly expanding one; to concentrate on change alone is to deal only with the immediate present and to avoid the development of an understanding of the rich heritage which the environment carries with it. But understanding must

lead to conduct, and if democracy is to survive, the schools must cultivate in their pupils ideals of freedom, tolerance, and open-mindedness, a critical attitude and intellectual sensitiveness based on ascertained facts and knowledge, a spirit of inquiry and insight, and those emotional qualities in addition which make for a sense of responsibility and co-operation. For democracy, in the words of Santayana, is a blind, groping adventure which implies open-mindedness and sensitiveness to the need of flexibility and adaptation of social institutions. These are the qualities which education can cultivate as the basis of social change.



## VI. Social Unrest and Educational Unrest

EVERY period of cultural change has been accompanied by changes in educational aims and content. Education has always been most vigorous when it has responded to the demands of the cultural and social environment. The world today is passing through great cultural changes which must inevitably be accompanied by changes in education. The greatest force in producing the current unrest has been the progress of science, which is remaking the world and bringing in its train new demands for adaptation in all aspects of life. The increased means and methods of communication—the press, the radio, moving pictures, more rapid means of transportation—have reduced the size of the world and, despite movements for national self-sufficiency, point to greater interdependence, material and cultural, among the peoples of the world. On the material side science has contributed to the improvement of machine production and has accelerated technological development; one result has been that more can be produced with less labor, a fact which has given rise to two problems—the more equitable distribution of the world's goods, and the use of increased leisure.

These are only the changes which are observable on the surface. Deeper and more serious are the resultant effects upon those institutional and social controls and allegiances which make for social stability. The status of the family is being transformed and, with it, the relations between parents and children; the influence of religious institutions is declining and traditional standards of moral conduct are being questioned; mechanical routine has displaced craftsmanship, and, as Phyllis Bentley has shown so clearly in her novel *Inheritance*, interest in the finished product has shifted to profits and dividends or to wages and hours of labor; political loyalties are being uprooted in a search for new objects of allegiance and new programs. The rapid disappearance of those institutions which served as social controls and were, to that extent, educational means a decline of authoritarianism, except where it is maintained by force and coercion. Skepticism has taken the place of faith; values and standards which not so long ago were regarded as permanent are being questioned and reconstructed.

From two points of view—the social unrest and the changes in the psychological foundations of education—the tradition of education has been subjected to criticisms of various kinds.<sup>1</sup> It is objected that the tradition ignored differences in environments and capacities of the pupils, that discipline was harsh because based on a false psychology, that instruction was

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter II.

directed to adjusting the pupil to a society which was assumed to be fixed and unchanging, and that this adjustment was secured by requiring the pupil to assimilate a certain body of facts, information, and knowledge. The conflict between the old and new is, of course, not new; it is the perennial conflict between education for the school and education for life. At present the conflict is concentrated on the curriculum.

If the curriculum is defined as an epitome of or introduction to the social and cultural life of a group, it is clear that its function is to provide not merely a body of knowledge which the group or society or the state regards as desirable for its stability and perpetuation, but a body of knowledge which contributes to the understanding and appreciation by each individual of the environment in which he is to live and play his part. The work of the school must, therefore, mediate between the individual and society. This thesis it is essential to emphasize, partly because of an educational tradition which was rooted in the subjects of the curriculum to the neglect of the interests and needs of the individual, partly because of a tendency in current theory of education to place the emphasis on the needs, interests, and experiences of the individual or on "growth with nothing fixed in advance." In the traditional theory, which came to be based on the disciplinary concept, subjects became crystallized and formal in both the elementary and secondary schools; in the current theory the emphasis on the needs and growth of the individual,

without any specific aim or direction and with especial stress on noninterference, comes near to making for education in a vacuum. To attack subjects as such is to ignore the facts, first, that they represent tools and experiences which the race has found necessary for its survival, and, secondly, that social progress is continuous and grows out of the past, despite the importance that may be attached to change and however much the "strangle hold of tradition" may be decried. To overemphasize the needs and growth of the individual is to forget that the individual can become a socialized personality only as he is initiated into the group culture and that, so far as formal education in the school is concerned, the curriculum must represent selections from the group culture which society regards as the most desirable and which are adapted to the needs of the individual for his development.

The characteristic emphases in the curriculum change with the values that the social group holds to be most important. For centuries it was dominated by the religious aim, which colored every subject that was taught—arithmetic, spelling, reading content, and even history and geography.<sup>1</sup> The religious

<sup>1</sup> Thus an arithmetic textbook of a century ago included such problems as the following: "(1) Mesha, King of Moab, was a sheep-master and rendered unto the King of Israel 100,000 lambs. Write down that number. (2) There are 24 chapters in the Gospel of St. Luke and 28 chapters in the Book of Apostles. What difference is there in the two?" Times and values may change but the technique of this type of "realistic" arithmetic has been resuscitated in recent German textbooks. Only two problems can be cited here

aim was followed by the demand for schools to disseminate literacy, a demand which, while it did not exclude the religious aim, added to it social and political aims which would, it was hoped, be attained by the spread of literacy. Running across both aims was the emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge on the Platonic theory that knowledge is virtue and, later, on Bacon's plea that knowledge is power. The three aims were combined when the founders of the United States insisted on the establishment of schools for the diffusion of "religion, morality, and knowledge." The curriculum was then organized everywhere on the basis that a certain quantum of knowledge is desirable and that knowledge was parceled out among standards or grades from the simple to the difficult and from the concrete to the abstract.

With the changes that took place during the nineteenth century new subjects were gradually added to the curriculum of the elementary schools or demanded admission to the secondary schools. This enrichment of the curriculum led to overcrowding and pressure. In response to Herbert Spencer's challenge the need for selection and discrimination began to be recognized; generally the preoccupation was with methods

from a Nazi *Rechenbuch*: "(1) It is estimated that the direct war costs amounted to the following fractions of national resources: Germany  $\frac{14}{31}$ , England  $\frac{1}{3}$ , France  $\frac{11}{32}$ , United States  $\frac{7}{24}$ ; arrange these fractions in order of size. (2) An aeroplane flies at the rate of 240 km. per hour to a place at a distance of 210 km. in order to drop bombs. When may it be expected to return, if the dropping of the bombs takes  $7\frac{1}{2}$  minutes?"

of instruction which would make an otherwise meaningless congeries of content palatable to the pupils. On the psychological side refuge was found in the theory of faculties and formal discipline, which justified drill and memorization for the accumulation of knowledge. Herbart pointed the way in a new direction; he attacked the faculty psychology; he showed how the burden on the pupils might be reduced by concentration and correlation; and he developed new methods of instruction which would make learning on the part of the pupils more active, vital, and meaningful. From this point the work was taken up by Herbart's successors, who continued the attack on the overburdened curriculum and sought to reduce the load by emphasizing the minimum essentials and further improvement of methods of instruction. This movement in its later stages, especially in the United States, applied scientific methods of analysis and the use of tests and measurements to the discovery of the minimum essentials.

In the meantime an entirely new mode of attack on the curriculum was gaining momentum. Inspired by the philosophy of John Dewey with his interpretation of interest as something intrinsic, a shift was being made from the approach by subjects and improvement of methods of instruction to a consideration of the needs of pupils, on the one hand, and of the society in which they lived, on the other. The development and contribution of child psychology,

of the psychology of growth, and of the new theory of the learning process provided a scientific foundation for the new philosophy. At first only methods of instruction, with an emphasis on child interests, thinking, and activity, were profoundly affected. Later the curriculum began to be reorganized in the light of children's interests and needs, and was centered around problems, projects, and activities derived from the experiences of the pupils themselves.

The final stage of this movement has been a concentration on these experiences and the promotion of growth through an activity curriculum which not only disregards subjects but breaks down subject-matter lines in the interests of integrated experiences, and ends by positing a curriculum with nothing fixed in advance. The justification for the last position is that there must be no obstacle to the on-going experiences of the child, that "subject-matter-set-out-to-be-learned," as it is phrased, is something imposed on the child, and that imposition or interference of any kind thwarts full, unimpeded growth. To justify the theory that the whole child grows through experiences as wholes, a new psychology, termed the "organismic psychology," has been invented.<sup>1</sup>

The general criticism which is made of the organization of the curriculum by subjects, whether in the

<sup>1</sup>It is unfortunate that the term "organismic psychology" is used in this connection, for it had already been pre-empted as an alternative for "Gestalt psychology."

elementary or in the secondary schools, is that subjects are formal and artificial aggregations of a content which does not grow out of the experiences of the pupils, that they are defined in advance, and that the pupils do not understand their meaning or purpose. To this criticism is added another, that the division of the time schedule into subjects leads to a compartmentalized type of mind, unable to apply the content of a variety of subjects to the solution of problems.

These criticisms seem, however, to ignore the changes which have taken place in the organization of the subjects themselves by the elimination of the useless, insignificant, and meaningless and by the stressing of functional values. From another point of view the fact is ignored that in most subjects there is an unavoidable amount of foundational and formal content, which, despite claims to the contrary, cannot be picked up incidentally. Further, it may be argued that to break down subject-matter lines in order to secure integration places a reliance on an external mechanism instead of on good teaching and good learning.

The attack on subject-matter organization ignores the fact that subjects are not something artificially created for use in schools but represent crystallized bodies of experiences and activities which the human race has found to be of the greatest and most permanent significance for its own survival as well as for its continued progress. Even if the instrumental



philosophy of education is accepted, subjects must be retained as tools, for, to quote John Dewey, "subjects are saturated with social meaning." They constitute the background of experience within and through which the individual learns and grows and derives meaning for his learning. "The traditional subjects," writes Professor Bode, "stood for an educational value, which we neglect at our peril."<sup>1</sup>

The emphasis on use and on the instrumental value of experience tends to ignore just this racial and social significance of subjects and fails to provide for that continuity which leads to enduring knowledge. But it does something more; it refuses to recognize the value of knowledge for anything but immediate use in "solving problems" or "meeting situations," and, to that extent, stresses method rather than content and restores that dualism which the instrumental philosophy sought to resolve. And yet knowledge has other values than mere use and application, for, as Dewey wrote in *Democracy and Education* (p. 281), "it is as true of arithmetic as it is of poetry that in some places and at some time it ought to be a good to be appreciated on its own account—just as an enjoyable experience, in short. If it is not, then when the time and place come for it to be used as a means or instrumentality, it will be in just that much handicapped. Never having been realized or appreciated in itself, one will miss something of its capacity as a resource for other ends." The words "use," "func-

<sup>1</sup> Bode, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

tion," and "activity" have in fact been defined too narrowly, and this narrowness has in turn led to a misinterpretation of what has been called passive learning. The pupil's response to material, whether in the form of memorization, action, or enjoyment, is his use of it, provided he understands it and is aware of meanings and consequences.

The new theories which make the child the starting point, the center, and the end of the educative process ignore the social purposes of the school as an institution established to promote certain ends. The child should be an active participant in the process, but his growth and the ends of education should be socially determined. The necessity of planning the purpose of and the materials for his growth is not excluded. Social organization, stability, and co-operation would become impossible without the adoption of certain common interests and objects of social allegiance, and a tradition of common aims and content.

This position can be reconciled with the new in so far as the pupil and the nature of his development are taken into consideration. As the pupil enters the school, his environment is still one great blooming, buzzing confusion; his experience is whole and undifferentiated. It is the function of the school to help the pupil to grow out of his immaturity to a stage of maturity where he himself recognizes the constituents that make up his experience; these constituents are the subjects into which the human race has crystallized

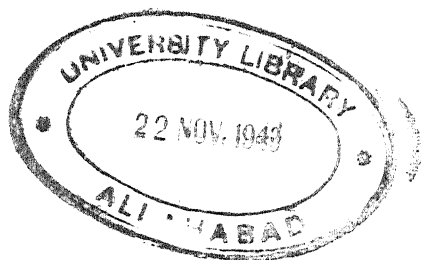
its experiences for use and for enjoyment. The advance that can be made is in constantly relating the curriculum to the environment in which the pupil grows, lives, and will take his place. The pupil and his environment must be made the starting point; the task of education is to provide the conditions for growth through an environment that is being constantly broadened and enriched, that is vicarious as well as immediate, and that makes possible an education which is constantly expanding in range and scope of meanings.

Such an education is neither passive nor static, for it recognizes the polarity of the pupil and his environment. It gives the pupil a part in the educative process, through active participation; it expands in accordance with the demands of the environment and makes provision for new expansions in the curriculum as other educational institutions become weaker—as in health and physical training, moral training, training for recreation, vocational training, and instruction in the arts and crafts. Since the environment carries in itself the stamp of the past and the seeds of the future, the curriculum must inevitably include that knowledge and information which will acquaint the pupil with the social heritage, introduce him to the world about him, and prepare for the future. But that future, because it is unpredictable, does not and cannot imply the possibility of planning in advance—an idea which is mentioned here because it has been put forward facilely. To talk of meeting the future

can mean only that education must cultivate breadth and variety of interests, insight, ability to judge critically and objectively, appreciation of standards of right and wrong, readiness to work and co-operate with others, a sense of tolerance and justice, and the art of living.

In this process the possession of knowledge both for use and for appreciation does not become less but more important, and the process is enlarged because it demands a curriculum which is not limited, as the traditional curriculum was limited, to intellectual training. But in seeking to develop the whole man—physical, moral, intellectual, and aesthetic—it does not follow that the curriculum shall be improvised as the immediate needs and interests of the pupil may demand and that the orderliness, sequence, and pattern of subjects should be discarded. The pupil should be the starting point, but what he becomes is determined by the environment which the school provides for his growth and his ability to understand and enter into that environment. But what the school environment, organized into a curriculum for instruction and education, will be depends upon the professional preparation and insight of the teachers. How far teachers will be in a position to bring their professional expertness to bear upon the problems which they must face depends in turn upon the character of the administrative systems under which they work. The educational unrest which is the product of social unrest is the chal-

lenge which teachers must meet in understanding the environment in and for which they are educating, the transition through which that environment is passing, and the part that the school, through instruction and education, can play in preparing men and women to understand, appreciate, and participate in the development of that environment.



## VII. Education and Psychology

NOTHING illustrates the growing complexity of the teacher's task more strikingly than the demands that the present situation makes upon his professional preparation. The time has passed when it was considered enough that a teacher knew the subjects that he was expected to teach and was equipped with a few simple rules of method supposedly derived from psychology. Lessons could be prepared on the understanding that a teacher must proceed from the known to the unknown, from the simple to the complex, from the concrete to the abstract, and must permit no impression without expression. These principles, supplemented with a knowledge of the meaning of sensations, perceptions, attention, memory, will, and emotions—psychological concepts which rarely, if ever, had any real significance for instruction—were considered to be the essential foundations for teaching successfully. All pupils were treated in the same way; individual differences were ignored, or, if a pupil failed, the reason for failure was attributed either to original sin or laziness or both; the term "maladjustment" was not even known, and individualization of instruction or adaptation to the abilities

and needs of pupils would have been regarded as failure on the part of the teacher. Equipped with a mastery of subject matter, frequently only enough for the day's lesson, and with authority reinforced by more concrete evidence of what a pupil might expect, the teacher proceeded on his daily round of bringing pupils up to standards set by external examiners and subject to the scrutiny of the inspector.

The data of education, the pupil and his environment, were never given a thought, since both were regarded as static and uniform—the pupils with minds capable of learning in the same way and the subjects defined either for training in literacy or for the transmission of a fixed concept of a liberal education. Mind was a substance divided into faculties, and the function of instruction was to train these faculties. Senses were trained through observation, memory was strengthened by drill and repetition, and reason was disciplined by difficult problems. Such an education, justified by the doctrine of formal discipline, prepared pupils to meet all the demands of life with a trained mind. In the search for a curriculum those subjects were regarded as most important which contributed to the desired ends of training and discipline.

The situation has changed. Today the teacher is expected to know something of the original nature, tendencies, and potentialities of the samples of humanity that he has to teach; he must be familiar with the physical and social backgrounds from which they

are drawn, the homes from which they come, the environment in which they live; he must have in mind the type of state and society in and for which they are to be educated; he must have a regard for their health, physical and mental; he must understand the causes of maladjustments and methods of correcting them; he must be acquainted with the distribution and types of individual differences; and he must be guided in his instruction by the laws or principles of the learning process.

Sir John Adams once made the statement that all the problems of education can be subsumed under the formula, "To teach John X" (X being the subject). In the traditional scheme John was a fixed and constant type and X was clearly defined in a somewhat narrow set of subjects; hence, attention was devoted to the rules and routine of teaching. Today the teacher is expected to know and understand John as a human being and as an individual, and X is the environment from which experiences, activities, content, or subjects are to be selected, by means of which John, according to his abilities, may grow into a social personality. Hence, the teacher is expected to be something of a biologist, something of a physiologist, something of a sociologist, and something of a psychologist in order to perform his task as an educator successfully.

The changes which are now taking place in education are due not only to changes in the theory or philosophy of education; an important contribution



has been made to the latter changes by psychology. It is at this point that difficulties at once arise, for since there has been developed a number of conflicting psychologies, a choice must be made among them.

An important departure from traditional concepts of the mind as substance receiving sensations, impressions, and imprints or as a stream of states of consciousness was made by Herbart. For the faculty concept of mind Herbart substituted his theory of the soul, or consciousness, as something real and active, with assimilative functions which make learning and understanding possible. All that the mind experiences is apperception, and the focus of attention is the point of greatest clearness—which is what Herbart meant by interest. The individual grows and matures through assimilation of new experiences crystallized into ideas. The life of the mind is essentially intellectualistic; emotions are only the reflection of the nature and relationship of ideas. Because he was interested in education as character formation, Herbart devoted more attention than his predecessors had done to the proper selection of curriculum and content and developed a method of building up ideas, for ideas lead to action. Herbart's method was formulated by his followers into the famous five formal steps, which, while they represented an advance on traditional methods, became in turn highly formalized and mechanical.

Psychology entered on a new era when the meth-

ods of science—observation and experimentation—began to be applied to the human being. The method of observation, though historically important because it resulted in an emphasis on the genetic approach, began to be criticized, despite the vast amount of information that was gathered, on the ground that it was based on opinion, hearsay, and introspection. Nevertheless, it did serve as a stimulus for further study of the human being by experimentation, which, with the aid of biology and physiology, turned its attention to such matters as instincts, play, habit formation, interest, discipline, transfer of training, individual differences, and the learning process. Through biology psychologists were stimulated to study the growth and development of psychological processes in the animal and the human species; through physiology their attention was directed to the importance of studying the nervous system. The new era was to mean that psychology was lifted out of its metaphysical and speculative character to a field of study based on the concrete, objective, experimental methods of a science.

Just as soon as the human being was subjected to observation, a new starting point was made available. Instead of the study of mind as an entity attention was now given to an investigation of the ways in which the human being acts and behaves. Investigation of behavior led to further inquiry in two other directions—how the human being behaves as he does and what makes him behave. The first of

these two questions gave rise to the study of the original nature of the human being as a biological and physiological animal; the second question brought the human being into relation with his environment in order to discover how the environment—physical and cultural—affects behavior. The pure behaviorist was content to base his theory of behavior on the nervous system as the datum which, through the stimulus of the environment, becomes organized into a series of reflex arcs; the human being, in other words, becomes conditioned and tends to respond in the same way to the same stimulus. Behavior, conduct, thinking are thus the effects of the environment on the structure of the human being and it is not necessary to posit the existence of a planning or controlling center called mind.

The mechanistic psychology takes up the story at this point; like behaviorism it starts with the physiological constitution of man and his tendencies to react to external situations. What a man does is the result of his original nature and the forces that act upon him, or of nature and nurture or of heredity and environment playing upon each other. Education is the process of action and reaction between the original nature of an individual and his environment. Original nature and its modifications are explained in terms of their responses or reactions, whether through thought, feeling, attitude, or disposition, and of the bonds by which these are connected with life situations. Any fact of intelligence, charac-

ter, or skill means a tendency to respond in a certain way to a certain situation or state of affairs. How one behaves in a situation depends upon the condition and activities of the organism, that is, its skills, ideas, ideals, and physical condition. The individual, then, starts, because of his structure or constitution, with certain tendencies to respond to stimuli, but the directions of the educative process are determined by the environment in which he lives and for which he is being educated. Of the original tendencies education seeks to preserve and strengthen some, to eliminate some, and to redirect others. The way by which this process is promoted is to make some responses pleasurable and satisfying and others annoying and distasteful.

The modifications that result from responses or reactions to stimuli make up the process of learning, for learning is not independent of structure but a function of it; all activity is learning, and to act is to become modified. Reaction to an objective fact, a subject, an idea, an experience, or an emotion is learning, and the reaction can be recalled, or it may be rejected and forgotten.

The learning process starts with human wants and needs for adjustment to the environment or, later, with acquired habits and attitudes, information and knowledge, skills and aptitudes. How well one learns depends upon his native abilities. Starting with the theory of satisfiers and annoyers, or pleasure and pain, the mechanistic psychology evolved three laws

of learning—the law of readiness, the law of exercise, and the law of effect. All learning is thus based on the life process of the neurons of the nervous system; man is an associative mechanism which aims to avoid what disturbs and to accept what satisfies this life process. Progress in learning consists, therefore, in the selection and organization of those reactions which bring satisfaction and the elimination of those which are annoying. This means, then, that mental functions may be improved; and the amount and rate of improvement can be measured.

The process of learning is continuous and the same for intellectual activities as for physical adjustment. To know a fact is to be able to react correctly to a situation, but the law of exercise demands repetition of the same fact not merely in an identical situation but in a variety of situations. Mastery is the cumulative result of reacting to many situations in which the same fact or idea or ideal appears. The same principles apply to reflection, creative imagination, problem-solving, or reasoning, which depend not on concrete situations but on situations thought about. The thinking process is started by the desire to overcome an obstacle or a difficulty—in other words, to satisfy a need or a want. This is what is meant by interest, which leads to a location and definition of the difficulty, to a suggestion for a solution on the basis of native or acquired intellectual equipment, to the development of the implications of the suggested solution on the basis of reasoning, to further observa-

tion and experimentation, and, finally, to verification.

This school of psychology maintains that any reactions which take place at any given moment are inevitable in terms of the conditions and circumstances of the moment, that is, of nature and nurture. At the same time the number and character of the reactions affect the structure, or native capacity, which in turn affects conduct and thinking, and so on. Because of oversimplification of this theory and an overemphasis on mechanisms and connections which defined the theory in terms of the stimulus-response bond, the theory has been subjected to the criticism that it is too atomistic, and that, like behaviorism, it posits the development of a series of conditioned neurons and assumes that a large collection of discrete and unconnected parts of behavior make up the whole of intelligence. In other words, it is objected that the responses of parts of the structure added together do not account for the complexities and delicate nuances of mature behavior and thinking. This criticism fails to take into account the full implications of the theory; in so far as it is warranted, it is valid in respect of a tendency to oversimplification in terms of stimulus-response bonds. One of the leaders of this school, Professor E. L. Thorndike, however, stated the theory not primarily in terms of a single response to a single stimulus, but of a response determined by the organism as a whole reacting intellectually and emotionally in the light of its present condition to a situation; he thus assumes purpose,

control, and direction—and not purely mechanical neural connectionism.

The behaviorist and mechanistic theories have been challenged by the Gestalt theory on the ground that perception is not an integration of parts; a Gestalt, or configuration, or form, cannot be conceived as a composition of its elements, for experience is always of wholes—we recognize a melody, not the individual notes of which it is composed; we see a triangle, not the three lines which make it up. The Gestalt theory rejects elements and associationism as applied to perceptions, and refuses to accept the concept of the nervous system as a complicated net of conductors functioning piecemeal. The Gestalt psychologists maintain, then, that the whole is prior to the part and that the process of learning is not the piecemeal addition of small units but the breaking-up of a complex whole into a number of simpler parts—for the whole determines the properties of its parts, and a clear picture of the whole gives color to the study of its parts. Further, recognition of a definite form, pattern, purpose, or function means elimination of useless acts and motions. Not only do we perceive things or situations as a whole but we react to them with the entire organism, with an interplay of all the forces available and not through a series of unconnected bonds. Experiences come as wholes and have *Prägnanz*, or precision; they demand clarity and completion in order to fit into patterns or forms. When asked how experiences are recognized as

wholes the Gestaltist answers, "By *insight*," without, however, explaining the origin of this insight except by saying that there is a principle of integration at the center of our thinking—which also needs explanation. Rejecting the concrete relationship of structure and function, he substitutes for it an ego which recognizes Gestalts and constantly builds up new ones.

If the mechanistic theory is open to criticism for oversimplification on the one hand and building up human behavior through a series of separate parts on the other, it may be argued that Gestalt theory has not produced adequate proof of its position. For the Gestaltist to say that purposeful activity corresponds to the closure concept, that is, fitting experiences into patterns, is only another way of stating, but without explaining in terms of structure, what the mechanist maintains—that purposeful activity is stimulated by sensing a difficulty in a situation. When the Gestaltist asks for the integration of subjects around normal or natural situations, the mechanist claims that behavior is determined by the present condition of the person as well as by the nature of the situation as a whole. For the Ego, or directing and controlling personality, of Gestalt psychology the mechanistic psychology substitutes the learner and his mental set. Learning for the mechanist is not mechanical but controlled from within by purposes of the learner's own making; it is not mere repetition but a mental activity conducted with attention, interest, and a sense



of fitness or "belongingness." At the higher level of thinking or reasoning each element in a situation is given weight, accepted, and incorporated if it is validated and "belongs," or eliminated and rejected if it does not help to carry the process forward. The emergent result built up out of such elements is not a jigsaw puzzle made up of parts, but a new pattern or skill or idea, with a new and enriched meaning.

It is conflicts such as these in one of the sciences on which the art of teaching is based that create difficulties for the teacher. The difficulties are still further increased when the teacher must take other theories into account. Where is the teacher to fit in Spearman's theory of the G-factor, that general ability or mental energy which means ability to integrate, to see relationships, and to create, as distinguished from special abilities? And what part do the emotions play in this G-factor? And, finally, there is another claimant for recognition at the educational door—psychoanalysis. The theories discussed above deal with the conscious forces that determine behavior and thinking; psychoanalysis puts forward a strong claim for the influence of unconscious forces which make us behave as we do and condition our lives without our being aware of them, and which may explain some of the causes of maladjustment. All that can be said of the possible contribution of psychoanalysis to educational procedures is that it is speculative and should be left to the specialist, despite the fact that complexes, inhibitions, and re-

pressions have already been incorporated into everyday language.

Under these conditions the only course for the teacher is to be eclectic. That the mechanistic theory has contributed much to the improvement of instruction in the drill subjects—reading, writing, arithmetic, and spelling—cannot be denied; that it has developed a sound theory of the simpler learning and thinking processes is also clear; that it has not contributed as much as it might have done to a theory of the higher thinking process is due not to the theory in itself but to certain misinterpretations of it through a desire for simplification. Fundamentally, according to this theory, thinking and reasoning follow the simple general laws of connecting, but they differ from the process of habit formation in being more subtle and complicated. Ideas, insights, and reasoning are the results of a vast increase in the number and fineness of connections.

The contributions to teaching practice of the Gestalt theory were already accepted before the theory itself became generally known. Thus, in manual training it has for a long time been recognized that pupils advance more rapidly if allowed to make objects instead of being put through the process of learning a grammar of manual skills; in art free painting or drawing has ousted drill in lines and curves; in music pupils begin with the playing of simple pieces rather than with exercises; in literature it is more profitable to read poems or plays or stories

as a whole than to dissect them line by line; in history the study by periods or topics is more valuable than mere chronological sequence; while the study of geography profits more from a topical or type approach than from the unconnected learning of place names. These methods of organization of materials and of instruction were developed from the point of view of a philosophy of education which emphasized the importance of interest, purpose, and relationships; Gestalt psychology confirms a practice already established, but the practice itself can be explained in terms of purposes or interests stimulated by situations as wholes. The advantage for the present seems to rest with the latter, which offers an explanation in terms of the structure and constitution of the individual, while the former, although built up on experimentation, still provides merely a speculative explanation.

The one conclusion that seems to be clear is the close relationship between philosophy of education, psychology, and methods of instruction. Psychology must provide philosophy with answers to such questions as the meaning of interest, the nature of the learning process and of thinking, the significance of individual differences in abilities and their nature and types, of differences in rates of growth and development, organization of curriculum and content, methods of instruction, and the meaning of nature and growth—which modern philosophy places at the center of the aims to be promoted by education.

## VIII. Education and Freedom

IF the essential characteristics of a period in the development of education can be indicated by the predominant emphasis given to certain ideas, the trends of the present period can be summarized by the emphasis placed upon "growth," "needs," "activity," and "freedom." The history of education is, indeed, a history of the conflict between the ideal of freedom and the ideal of authority and control, a conflict which has been sharpened by the conflict between these ideals in the realm of practical politics. From the educational point of view the issue may be summarized by two ways of looking at the educational process. The authoritarians would say that the school must decide what Johnny ought to do and compel him to do it. The advocates of freedom would define the educational task as one either of finding out what Johnny wants to do and allowing him to do it, or of discovering what Johnny is capable of doing and should be encouraged to do, and helping him to do it.

The authoritarian view disregards the child entirely, sets up a program of studies wholly divorced from his life, and justifies its procedure on the ground that these studies may at some time or other be found

useful or that they help to train the mind; the emphasis is on discipline. Both the child and the subjects to be studied are regarded as fixed entities, and the gap between the two is bridged by extrinsic efforts to make learning interesting, or by the stimulus of rewards and punishments. Starting with the plasticity of the child the authoritarian would inculcate those habits, opinions, and ways of life which adults regard as valuable for social living. The success of the educative process is measured by the amount of knowledge that has been acquired and by the ability to apply that knowledge in exercises which have meaning for the school but not for life. Character formation is not ignored, but it is either expected to be a by-product of effort in mastering tasks that are otherwise uncongenial or of content properly selected for moral instruction, or else provision is made for such formation by nonscholastic activities on the playing field or through the corporate life of the school. The absurdity of the authoritarian point of view was once expressed by an American humorist as follows, "It doesn't matter what you teach a child so long as he doesn't like it."

The advocates of freedom range from those who propose to leave the child to his own devices, to follow his own interests, drives, and urges, to "grow," without defining any goal or direction, to those who, believing in freedom as the ideal of education, hold that freedom is not a gift but a conquest and that it can be achieved only by a slow and gradual process

of training. The extreme advocates of freedom, impressed with the sanctity of the child, urge the free development of the child, unrestrained by any external controls or obligations, and refuse to recognize any loyalties or social obligations, on the ground that external interference of any kind will thwart the child's spontaneous growth. The child must be free to develop his own standards of conduct, to express himself, and to engage in activities of his own choice. That freedom in this absolute sense has no meaning is ignored; freedom in this sense is defined as the absence of external restrictions. This concept of freedom, starting with the biological concept of life as something which inherently strives to realize itself and influenced superficially by the contributions of psychoanalysis, concentrates its attention on the individual. But it ignores the fact that the individual can realize himself only in a social environment, which in itself imposes certain limitations on that free growth which is assumed to be desirable. Because these limitations are ignored, no place is provided in this theory for discipline or a sense of responsibility of any kind.

Although it has been so misinterpreted, freedom as an end in education cannot be rejected. That its extreme proponents have been so dogmatic in their protests against the tradition of control and coercion which was itself dogmatic, is a challenge to those who recognize the value and importance of freedom to examine it in the light of reality. That freedom is a conquest has been as true of the progress of mankind

as it must be recognized to be of the growth of the individual. It was achieved as man learned the art of controlling and disciplining himself; it can be achieved by the individual only as he acquires the same art. The whole history of mankind has been the history of the emancipation of man from external controls, and at the same time it has been the history of the ways in which man has learned to control himself in the interests of others and to make life in organized society possible.

This history has been one of emancipation from the thralldom of fears—of nature, of slavery, of political tyranny and from external controls and coercions over the mind and body of the individual. Man's struggle for personal freedom, for freedom of movement, freedom of thought and expression, and freedom of worship, and for justice, tolerance, and equality of opportunity has been painfully slow, and the struggle is not yet ended and is never likely to be. But in emerging successfully from the struggle man did so by learning that he must accept limitations on his freedom by recognizing his responsibility to others. It was only as he learned to appreciate the moral consequences of his actions that he became free. Freedom, in other words, has been a conquest which man has achieved by his intellectual acceptance of faith in a moral order.

What has been true of the history of civilization applies equally to the education of the individual; freedom is not an inherent right—totalitarian states

have demonstrated how easily it may be lost—but a privilege to be won and retained only by realizing its significance. It is in confusing freedom with non-interference or absence of external control and in failing to stress social and moral obligations guided by intelligent foresight of consequences that those who have been most vociferous in their demands for freedom in education have erred. The pleas for self-expression, self-activity, initiative, and spontaneous growth have failed to recognize the fact that the true self can be realized only in and through a social milieu, by taking on that milieu's culture and communal values. The fundamental issue is the extent to which such realization of the self can be free and yet result in a socialized personality. Here again the answer will be found in the principle that freedom is a right which, like all other rights, must be won, and that all rights imply a corresponding responsibility in their use, no matter what the field of activity may be.

Nowhere does this principle, which recognizes the polarity of the individual and society, need to be stressed more than in democracies. For as long as democratic government depends upon the intelligence of the ordinary individual and upon his ability to contribute to the life of the society of which he is a member, the individual must not only be trained to this end but he must act on, because he accepts them intellectually, objects of social allegiance. He must learn how to reconcile the conflicts between



his own interests and the interests of society. He must, in other words, learn to discipline himself, for the essence of intelligent freedom is the recognition of responsibility. The traditional school, like some forms of government, rested on a process of conditioning the mind and will; democracies are based on intelligence and elicit intelligence. But until the concept of responsibility is incorporated into discussions of the meaning of freedom in education, education cannot be expected to make its rightful contribution to a democratic society. If eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, eternal education is the only sure safeguard of free institutions.

There is, further, another aspect of growth which implies certain limitations on freedom. Effective freedom implies a mind that is trained to think, to reflect, to make a choice, and to exercise initiative and resourcefulness. These qualities cannot be acquired simply by giving the child a chance to grow, without something more than guidance and advice from a teacher; their development implies a selection of those experiences which, from the point of view of society, are valuable and important; it implies a plan and a sense of direction. If a society establishes schools, it does so for a definite purpose; it is the responsibility of the teaching profession to define that purpose and the methods of its attainment. It is only as direction and plan are available that the intellectual limitations on freedom in education come to stand out clearly. It is not enough to provide an environment for the

spontaneous growth of the child; that environment must provide a proper sequence of articulated experiences whereby the pupil will discover the need and significance of the acquisition of those skills, knowledges, and other resources which make his growth in freedom possible.

It is clear, then, that from whatever point the question of freedom in education is approached, a consideration of its limitations immediately emerges. The pupil does not spontaneously grow into the possession of skills in writing, arithmetic and other fundamental tools, language or literature, or the other phases of group culture which will make him not only a social but an educated personality. The problem is not one of free education but of education for freedom. In such an education the teacher is more than a guide or arbiter waiting on one side until he is called upon to help. He is himself part of the educative process; he is, indeed, one of the important limitations on the freedom of the pupil, just as much as is the environment in which the pupil grows. How the teacher uses his position will depend on his understanding and appreciation of the process of child development and the ends to be achieved. He will not ignore the importance of discipline, but he will bring his pupils to recognize, with him, that importance as the basis of an orderly life and an orderly mind, and to accept that discipline as their own will. The process must be from external discipline to self-discipline based on appreciation and acceptance of

the conduct—physical and intellectual—that is expected in a social group.

The extreme advocates of absolute freedom seem to assume what Professor Dewey has called spontaneous germination of mental life. Referring to the theory of this group that nothing must be fixed in advance for the pupils, that no end or plan should be suggested to them lest this procedure be an unwarranted trespass on their sacred intellectual individuality, Professor Dewey goes on to say, "Now such a method is really stupid. For it attempts the impossible, which is always stupid; and it misconceives the conditions of independent thinking. There are a multitude of ways of reacting to surrounding conditions, and without some guidance from experience these reactions are almost sure to be casual, sporadic and ultimately fatiguing, accompanied by nervous strain."<sup>1</sup>

The attention which has been given to freedom in education, despite a certain tendency to misinterpret it, has been extremely salutary. It is a challenge to the dogmatism of authority in matters not only of discipline but also of the content of instruction. It has redirected attention to the child and the process of his growth and development. Supported by recent contributions from psychology, educational theory has accepted the principle of activity as the underlying principle of this process. Always the challenge is to choose between an education for the school with

<sup>1</sup> Dewey, John, Barnes, Albert C., Buermeyer, *et al.*, *Art and Education*, Merion, Pa., 1929.

its traditional emphasis<sup>1</sup> and an education for life.

This challenge is not new; it has always been found in the history of education and has gained in force and insistence as the world has become more and more complicated. New demands are being made on intelligence if it is to function in the life of the individual and of society. While there will always remain certain permanent values which education must cultivate, such as intellectual honesty, love of truth, ability to think clearly, moral qualities, and a desire for more education, the question which the educational world is called upon to answer today is how to secure a close connection between the school and life; the demand is for a greater realism which would promote at once a full development of the life of the growing child and an understanding and appreciation of the world in which he lives.

The change in the approach to education has been brought about by a number of causes. The first of these is a better understanding of intellectual growth and the development of the interests of the child, accompanied by the recognition of individual differences in ability and in rates of development. Hence the importance of starting with each pupil as an individual to be developed, the first datum in an education for freedom. From psychology has come another contribution, that real learning does not mean memorization but active participation by the pupil, for he learns best who learns with interest and purpose

<sup>1</sup> See p. 20 f.

—purpose being the basis of interest. To these must be added the change in the concept of discipline, with an emphasis not on external authority and coercion but on gradual growth in reasoned self-control.

Education must start, then, with a full understanding of the pupil to be educated, a pupil who even when he enters school has certain tendencies, potentialities, and needs to be developed and satisfied. But since the pupil lives and grows in a particular cultural environment, the function of education is to enable him to understand that environment, to help him gradually to broaden and enrich it. While the traditional school was directed almost wholly to intellectual training, today physical and emotional training are recognized not merely as equally important in the development of a whole person but as in many ways affecting intellectual progress. It is for this reason that so much attention is being devoted to health and physical education, on the one hand, and to arts, crafts, and music, on the other.

If, then, education is to grow out of life and give meaning to life, it is clear that the primary consideration must be not subjects as subjects but the degree to which subjects contribute to the pupil's understanding of the world around him; their values must not only be relevant to the environment but the pupil must realize and appreciate their relevancy. Hence, instead of making subjects the starting point, we must find it in the interests and experiences of

the pupil, and these in turn must be made over into the great body of human experiences called subjects. For subjects, as Professor Dewey has said, are saturated with social meaning and represent those experiences which man has found necessary for living, not merely as tools or instruments but as goods to be appreciated and enjoyed in themselves.

Dewey's definition of education as life and not a preparation for life is frequently repeated, but rarely is it examined. Of course life educates; it may also miseducate. The essential difference between life as education and the school as an educational agency is that the school must select experiences from life which are morally and intellectually valuable for the growth of the pupil. Properly interpreted, the expression that education is life means that the work of the school must be based on the needs and interests of the child. This is what is meant by the statement that there has recently been a shift of emphasis from the subject to the child. A sound education should be based on the concept that the child is not a passive being to be molded in a certain way or to be filled with facts and information, but an active person with interests and tendencies to grow, if placed in the right kind of environment. It is not enough merely to allow the child to grow spontaneously; rather would it be sounder to say that society establishes schools in order to provide an environment for the all-round development of social personalities.

If education is to be for life, then a classroom can

no longer be regarded as a place to which children are compelled to come in order to sit rigidly at attention and to absorb facts, information, and knowledge on which they are subsequently to be examined. Rather is it the function of education to enable the pupils, through content selected for that purpose, to understand the environment in which they live, to cultivate breadth of interests, to gain the ability to find information for themselves, to develop the capacity for judgment, to acquire an appreciation of standards of right and wrong, to be stimulated to a readiness to work and co-operate with others, and to be initiated into the art of living. This is an education for freedom.

These ends cannot be achieved by what has been called the child-centered school, even if it is assumed that such a school exists. For such a school is open to the same criticism as the traditional school, with the difference that while, in the one, subjects were the centers, the child is the center in the other. The data of education are, however, the child, on the one side, and the environment, on the other; and such success as may have been achieved by a child-centered school is normally due to the fact that the teacher is inspired by a mastery of the content of instruction and an understanding of the child to be educated.

There is, in fact, no royal road to education. Freedom in education cannot be achieved by discarding all traditional values and allowing pupils to follow their own drives and urges for self-expression; it can-

not be achieved if the school stresses discipline in the hope that some day the individual will learn to be free; it cannot be achieved by discarding an orderly sequence of subjects and of content within a subject on the ground that experience is whole, undifferentiated, and integrated; nor can it be achieved by a program of activities which, without being defined in advance, grow one out of the other.

In all the discussions of education and freedom attention has been concentrated on the child. Enough has been said to stress the point that the child is not the only datum of education; the environment has been mentioned as another. There is a third, the teacher, who somehow or other has not been brought into the picture. This has been due to the subordination of teachers in the past to external authority, prescribed curricula, and rigid supervision, due in turn to an authoritarian theory of education. But in an education for freedom the teacher must also be free. What is demanded today is not skill in routine and the mechanics of instruction so much as resourcefulness, enterprise, understanding, and versatility based on intelligent mastery of the principles of child development as well as of the cultural environment in which and for which that development takes place.

It is obvious that the ends of education described above cannot be achieved under systems in which the syllabus or course of study is prescribed in such rigid terms and in such detail that conformity and uniformity become marks of a teacher's excellence,



rather than adaptation to the needs of the pupils and their environments. Modern trends in education demand more freedom for the teacher, but such freedom can be achieved only if it is accompanied by a sense of responsibility based on a different type of professional preparation longer than is now generally available. Professional preparation, however, is in itself a limitation on the freedom of the teacher.

Thus, the movements for education and freedom (it would be better to say education for freedom) and for bringing education and life into touch again are two facets of the one movement—a desire to help the growing generation to meet the environment of the age in which it lives and to preserve sufficient flexibility to make adaptations to and of the environment possible. Not only is this true education; it is the education by which the ideals of democracy will be preserved and perpetuated.

## IX. Secondary Education for All

THE provision of secondary education for an increasing number or all of the pupils of adolescent age is a crucial problem everywhere. It brings in its train problems of administration, organization, the proper age for differentiation, the types of curriculum to be offered, educational guidance, as well as a consideration of values in what has been traditionally known as secondary education. As long as secondary education was intended for the few the problem was one of selection; with the changing demands of the present the problem has become one of distribution, so that the right education may be provided for the right pupil under the right teacher. Simple as this formula is, however, every term in it calls for definition.

Secondary education is one of the oldest forms of education. In content and spirit it can be traced back to the Greek period. It has been essentially selective and has perpetuated a tradition of liberal education for the few which in the course of the nineteenth century came to be protected by special privileges (*Berechtigungen* in Germany, *sanctions* in France, and matriculation in British countries).

When elementary education began to be provided by the national governments early in the nineteenth century, its scope was limited to the dissemination of literacy. The plea which appealed to the imagination was that a literate public would develop higher standards of citizenship and morality. With the progress of the nineteenth century the elementary-school curriculum was gradually expanded and enriched by the addition of new subjects. Slowly there evolved from this expansion middle schools, higher elementary schools, higher grade schools, and central schools. Nevertheless, elementary and secondary education were not articulated or fused, with the result that a dual system<sup>1</sup> was established—one for the masses and the other for the few selected either on the basis of ability to pay fees or on the basis of intellectual ability. Still later, technical and vocational education of various types was added and again kept in separate compartments and even under distinct authorities. The result was an amorphous provision of different types of education without any co-ordination or articulation.

During and after the War movements began everywhere to develop unified and integrated systems of education which would provide natural stages of transition based on differences of abilities and interests. These movements were started under almost

<sup>1</sup> Except of course, in the United States, but even here the high school was not recognized as a part of the "common-school system" until after 1874; and it continued for many years to be selective in character.

identical names—in France the *école unique*, in Germany the *Einheitsschule*, in Britain secondary education for all. The same motives underlay the proposals for reorganization. The first was the recognition of the worth of the individual and of the fact that ability is not confined to any one class; in the interests of individual and national progress it is necessary to provide opportunities for education as far as an individual is capable of profiting from it. Secondly, it was realized that elementary education alone gives an inadequate preparation for life in the modern world. Science is remaking the world and bringing with it social, political, and economic changes. Technological changes are responsible not merely for unemployment but for the unemployability of youth without training. Further, changes in standards of living and reduction in hours of labor demand not only longer but more varied types of education. Thirdly, education is looked upon as an investment for both individual and society, bringing returns in better health and more intelligent citizenship. Fourth, the increase in numbers attending the secondary schools with their traditional, academic curricula has directed attention to the need of revision because of the increasing number of failures and educational maladjustments. The increased enrollments bring into the schools a wider range of abilities and individual differences of capacity and consequently give rise to the problem of reconsidering the nature of the secondary-school curriculum. Finally,

attention has been directed to the same problem—the distribution of education—by another postwar phenomenon, the overproduction of intellectuals and overcrowding in the professions. All these factors except the last had already begun to exercise an influence in the reorganization of secondary education in the United States some years before they affected other countries.

Hence, the movement for the reorganization of secondary education has come to be broadened to include at the base a common education for all in primary schools, articulation between the primary and postprimary stages of education, and the provision of equality of opportunities for all according to abilities and interests. The ideal has been beautifully defined by M. Léon Brunschvicg in the following words: "It is important that all the children of a country should be considered alike as living plants, whose spontaneous growth will be assured by the same methods; only the trunk will be allowed to grow up to a certain height before the branches are permitted to shoot out without the opposition of any artificial obstacle to the expansion of their being, whose innate powers will raise each up to the level designed for it."

The first task that had to be met, to bring schools of all types under a single administrative authority, was a fairly simple matter. To reorganize schools of different types into an articulated, end-on, integrated system was more difficult. It involved, for example,

interference with certain vested rights, which might be affected by the decapitation of schools or creaming not merely the top but taking all pupils above a certain age away from the elementary schools. More difficult than either of these problems was the development of adequate methods of discovering differences of abilities. And most difficult of all was it to devise suitable programs of study adapted to pupils of different abilities and to secure parental and public approval of them in the face of certain traditional attitudes.

The traditional method of selecting pupils for admission to new schools has been by examinations, with or without the teachers' estimates of a candidate. Ample evidence of the unreliability of examinations has for a long time been available in the United States; it has been confirmed in England by Professor Valentine in his book on *The Reliability of Examinations* and by the report on *An Examination of Examinations* by Sir Philip Hartog and Dr. E. C. Rhodes. A German investigation showed that teachers' estimates are unreliable if they are made without training. The general conclusion of a number of investigations conducted in England, France, Germany, Scotland, the United States, and elsewhere seems to be that the best method of discovering what needs to be known about a pupil's ability and promise must include teachers' estimates, school records over a period of years, and a variety of tests and examinations; in other words, in order to provide the right educa-

tion for the right pupil a cumulative record giving as much information as can be obtained about him is essential. Education in the United States is not free from this problem but its pressure is recognized at a later stage—that of admission to college.<sup>1</sup>

And yet even if the fullest information is available about a pupil's abilities and interests and if curricula are provided from which he can best profit, the obstacle that is too frequently encountered is a certain tendency to prefer the traditional, academic curriculum to the practical. This is the result of what Mr. Oliver Stanley, formerly president of the English Board of Education, recently described as "inverted snobbery." It is found as much where the different courses are provided in separate schools as in the multiple-bias or comprehensive high schools of the United States. It is exemplified in England by the tendency of certain schools, not originally intended for that purpose, to prepare pupils for the first secondary-schools examination or for matriculation.

In all these movements only one point has been definitely recognized and accepted, that primary education should be continued up to about the age of eleven or twelve, when some form of postprimary education should be begun. Beyond that there is no general agreement. There is a tendency, in drawing a line of demarcation between primary and postprimary education, to state that the former should

<sup>1</sup> See I. L. Kandel, *op. cit.*

provide an education common to all and the latter should be differentiated according to pupils' abilities. But when the methods of differentiation are considered, the only one generally discovered is a rough division into ability for academic studies and ability for practical courses, or into the academic and non-academic pupils. And yet if the provision of longer education is desirable in the interests of more enlightened citizenship, no such differences in the common duties of a citizen are found to exist. Not enough attention has been devoted to the possibilities of differentiation in such matters as methods of instruction adapted to differences of abilities, as rates of progress, and as adaptation of content.

There appears at present to be some danger in too literal an interpretation of the meaning and methods of differentiation. Since all will be called upon to fulfill the duties of citizenship, conceived as broadly as possible in terms of public and private conduct, it seems clear that all should be entitled to a general education for as long as possible. How to provide a liberal or cultural education for all according to interests and abilities should be the first consideration. Unfortunately, the traditional concept of a liberal education starts with an emphasis on the study of foreign languages and other subjects which have come to be associated with admission to the universities.

To continue this practice is to fail to recognize the changing needs and demands of the day. In the words



of Dr. C. Delisle Burns, "Changes are going on around us and we still cling to the old idea that we must produce persons and treat them in the old way." The new situation demands that the study of those subjects that give meaning to life and the world around us should be the same for all but differentiated in range of content and in methods of instruction. Postprimary education should provide a common core of subjects for all, whether in the same school or in separate schools, with differentiation or specialization to follow later.

But there is another problem which goes to the heart of the traditional concept of a liberal education, and that is whether a liberal education can any longer be defined in terms of academic courses alone. The starting point in considering this problem should be the striking statement in the English Consultative Committee's report on *The Education of the Adolescent* that "a humane or liberal education is not one given through books alone, but one which brings children into contact with the larger interests of mankind; and the aim of schools . . . should be to provide this by means of a curriculum containing large opportunities for practical work and related to living interests." This principle has, indeed, been inherent in the theory underlying the reorganization of the high-school curriculum in the United States; it has none the less been just as difficult as elsewhere to implement it in practice.

It is obvious that these interests must be such as

make life interesting and give it meaning. Their range has already been indicated, by definition, as belonging to the larger interests of mankind. It is this definition that distinguishes "living interests" from those stressed by some theorists who would confuse them with "immediate interests" and preoccupation with the current events of the day. "Living interests" take up and continue the spiritual heritage of the race in order that the pupil may acquire an understanding of the world in which he lives. Such interests would be of as little significance as the traditional values if they failed not merely to impart knowledge and cultivate understanding but also to influence attitudes and conduct. It is for this reason that it is unnecessary to discuss character formation as something unaffected by instruction. No one would deny the importance, for the development of character, of the corporate spirit and activities of a school any more than one would be correct in assuming that the school is the only agency for molding character. The present discussion is, however, devoted to a consideration of curricular reforms demanded by the present situation. Nor again is it intended, because the topic is not discussed at length, to ignore or minimize the importance of physical education for all-round development.

The distinction which is usually made between academic and nonacademic pupils is made on the basis of ability to study the traditional secondary-school subjects. Except in the United States, and

there mainly in theory, the curriculum values for both have not been reconsidered from the point of view of "living interests." Traditional values are still too potent, and are bolstered up either by an appeal to disciplinary values or to an "inverted snobbery" which has tended to make secondary education a class education. Despite definitions of the function of postprimary education as the provision of "a progressive course of education of a kind and amount suited to an age range at least from twelve to seventeen"—a definition which invites a reconsideration of values—the old practice of defining such education in terms of traditional subjects still survives.

What, then, are the living interests which should have prior consideration? Of these, no one would be disposed to dispute the importance of a mastery of the vernacular and its literature, but, although this aim is generally accepted, even this subject has been academicized for examination purposes, and little has been done except in France to cultivate not only habits of reading but ability to read so as to acquire the significance of the printed page, to develop taste, judgment, and standards of discrimination. Next should come the social studies—history and geography as a study of man in the past and present. This is not a plea for what is called in the United States an "integrated course," for the able teacher who knows his history or geography should be able to clothe them with meaning for the present. In the modern world a knowledge of the sciences is indispensable,

but this need is not met by courses in physics and chemistry organized for a matriculation examination on the tacit assumption that all pupils will become scientists. If the sciences are to have any real value in a program of common studies they must cultivate an understanding of the world around us and of their significance for modern life. What is needed is an intelligent man's guide to science. In the same way, for purposes of common education, the place of mathematics in everyday life and in the intellectual world should be stressed. Room must be found for those subjects which, because they were not examinable, have been appendages of education—music, arts, and crafts, studied not merely for constructive recreation but for the enrichment of life. And if foreign languages, ancient or modern, are to be studied, their justification must for most pupils be measured by the extent to which they train in ability to read and in ability to understand the civilization and culture of another nation. If nothing has been said about the current demand for training for leisure, it is because any one or all of the interests described may well serve the purpose. To differentiate in a common education—that is, an education which will be pursued by the large majority of postprimary pupils up to about the age of fifteen or sixteen—between leisure subjects and others would be to perpetuate the old distinction which, from Aristotle down to the present time, has existed between liberal and nonliberal studies.

It is on such a foundation that specialization for those who will continue their education beyond the first level of postprimary education can be built. If no reference has been made to vocational preparation, it is because the demand everywhere is for more general education, and the trend is in the direction of such preparation in a system of co-operation between employers and education authorities.

One point that is clear is that the problem of secondary education cannot be solved by slipping schools of new types into a system and leaving the rest, whether secondary or technical, undisturbed. A fresh start must be made, not from the point of view of vested interests and traditional values established for the few, but in the interests of modern society and the abilities and needs of the individual pupils who are to be educated. This does not mean that standards of quality should be lowered or that the need which every country has of an intellectual élite should be ignored. It does imply that a common education that will give an understanding of the modern world must come first, and on the basis of that common education those who can profit from further education and specialized education can be selected.

## X. Examinations and Guidance

It is not an accident that attention is being devoted to the troublesome question of examinations. There is scarcely a problem in education which is not affected by them, whether it is the revision of the curriculum or methods of instruction, differentiation of courses, or freedom of teachers.

The development of education appears to be in the direction of discovering the right education for the right pupil under the right teacher. If, then, education is to be adapted to the interests and abilities of the pupils, it is clear that a method must be discovered whereby those interests and abilities may be revealed. If the statement of the latest edition of the English *Handbook of Suggestions for the Consideration of Teachers and Others Concerned in the Work of Public Elementary Schools* is accepted—namely, that there has been a shift of emphasis from the subject to the child—then it is equally clear that more must be known about the child to be educated. The issue today is not between examinations and no examinations, nor even between external and internal examinations. The problem is how to eliminate the weaknesses of the traditional method of examination

and provide better, more reliable, and more accurate methods to take its place. There are few educational systems which are not confronted by the need of solving the questions involved in the functions and purposes of examinations.

With the arguments against the traditional examinations every student of education is familiar. They tend to control the curriculum and methods of instruction because they come to dominate the work of schools. They tend to be accepted as ends in themselves. They are abused when they are employed as a method of educational administration to assess the quality of teachers. As the sole criterion for admission to schools and universities they are inadequate as a measure of a pupil's abilities and promise. And, finally, they tend to deflect the interest of teachers, parents, pupils, and public from the real purposes of education, for they tend to set up a conflict between their prescribed requirements and desirable programs of study. The traditional examinations are based on a traditional concept of culture and education and tend to restrict the progress of both. To this extent they fail, on the one hand, to consider needed changes in curriculum as demanded by modern needs, and, on the other, they ignore the widening range of individual differences of capacity which is due to the increasing number of pupils proceeding beyond the primary-school stage.

The case was well summed up by Dr. C. Delisle Burns, when, at the first International Conference

on Examinations, he stated that "one of the worst troubles in the whole examination system is that it has been devised by professors, and the best thing that professors can think of is themselves; they, therefore, test candidates by what are tests of competence for professors, but not for bankers and other persons."

Examinations of some type cannot, indeed, be dispensed with. The issue is how to improve them, how to make them more accurate and more reliable, how to devise new substitutes for the traditional types, and, finally, how to employ them for the rightful purpose of guiding the education of each pupil. They can serve another purpose: too often the pupil himself is blamed for failure; properly administered and interpreted, a good examination should help the teacher to diagnose his own methods of instruction.

The problem of adapting education to the abilities of pupils and, therefore, of devising methods for discovering those abilities is not new. It was discussed by John Locke as it is today discussed by psychologists and educational administrators. There is no more pertinent and appropriate statement than the following analysis by Locke of the problem with which the educational world is confronted in the twentieth century:

God has stamp'd certain Characters upon Mens Minds, which like their Shapes, may perhaps be a little mended; but can hardly be totally alter'd and transform'd into the contrary.



He therefore, that is about Children, should well study their Natures and Aptitudes, and see, by often trials, what turn they easily take, and what becomes them; observe what their Native Stock is, how it may be improved, and what it is fit for: He should consider, what they want; whether they be capable of having it wrought into them by industry, and incorporated there by Practice; and whether it be worth while to endeavour it. For in many cases, all that we can do, or should aim at, is to make the best of what Nature has given; to prevent the Vices and Faults to which such a Constitution is most inclined, and give it all the Advantages it is capable of. Every one's Natural Genius should be carried as far as it could, but to Attempt the putting another upon him, will be but Labour in vain.

In 1931 an International Conference of Examinations was called by Dr. Paul Monroe, then director of the International Institute of Teachers College, Columbia University. The first meeting, held at Eastbourne, was attended by representatives from England, France, Germany, Scotland, Switzerland, and the United States. It was clear from the discussion that, in each country represented, the seriousness of the problem was recognized; it was equally clear that a single international inquiry into examinations was impossible. National committees were, therefore, appointed to investigate examinations in the light of their own systems of education and their own peculiar problems. The committees were ready to report in 1935 at a conference held at Folkestone.

The English committee, which had been informed by the officials of one university that "we think that we know everything that is to be known about examinations," had devoted itself to a study of concurrences or agreements among independent examiners and among boards of examiners in marking the same set of papers. A wide range of papers from a great variety of examinations, ranging from the eleven plus examination<sup>1</sup> to university honors examinations, was used in the investigation. The results showed complete discrepancy in every device that was used. The same system of marking papers was employed as in the original examination; the same papers were marked at intervals of a year; two groups of examiners were appointed to mark the same papers; general standards and details of marking were discussed in trial markings; an English essay was marked by general impression and in detail; and numerical and literal marks were used.

The results, as published in *An Examination of Examinations*, revealed wide discrepancies in the marks of the examiners. Thus, fifteen school-certificate papers in history which had received the same mark in the actual examination received forty-three different marks (from twenty-one to seventy-six) from fourteen examiners in the first scoring and forty-four different marks (from sixteen to seventy-one) in the second. On two Latin papers fifteen books of the same grade in the original examination received

<sup>1</sup> See note, p. 50.

twenty-four different marks (from twenty-six to fifty) from six examiners who had been given a detailed scheme of marking, while seven examiners marking on another scheme assigned twenty-eight different marks (from twenty-six to sixty-one) to the same books. Two groups of examiners, after receiving about ninety detailed instructions for marking thirty chemistry papers, gave five to ten failures, two to eleven passes, nine to sixteen credits, and zero to eight distinctions. In a special-place examination the average range of marks by couples of examiners was thirty-three, from twelve to sixty-three marks. In a university mathematical honors examination one candidate received one hundred thirty-two, one hundred twenty-three, and one hundred sixty-nine marks and another one hundred eighty-six, one hundred seventy-seven, and two hundred ten marks. An experimental oral examination revealed no cases of complete agreement between two groups of examiners, who respectively placed one candidate first and thirteenth, and another first and eleventh. The investigators could reach only the conclusion that the element of chance in examinations exists to a dangerous degree. They did not, however, recommend the abolition of examinations but directed attention to the importance of devising a method of examination "not liable to the distressing uncertainties of the present system."

The French committee limited itself to a study of the marking of papers written for the *baccalauréat*

examination. One hundred papers in six subjects were marked by five examiners on a scale of twenty. In the French essay there was a variation of thirteen points; in the marking of the philosophical thesis and the Latin translation a variation of twelve points; in English and mathematics there was a variation of nine points; and in physics of eight points. There were apparently no standards of marking except subjective ones, and there was no agreement among examiners except by accident.

The German committee, until it was discontinued in 1933, discovered that teachers' estimates of their pupils were unreliable, but that teachers could be trained to make their estimates more accurate. For purposes of prognosis or predicting a pupil's success the school examination was found to be of slight value; objective tests had a higher prognostic value; but a combination of different methods yielded the safest results. Another investigation revealed unreliability in marking essays. On the whole the committee was inclined to favor continuous, or cumulative, records as the best guide to a pupil's abilities and promise.

The Scottish committee, already familiar with the techniques of scientific investigation of educational problems, undertook a prospective study, or mental survey, of 90,000 pupils born in 1921; the results were published in a book under the title *The Intelligence of Scottish Children: A National Survey of an Age-Group*. Of the pupils studied 1,000 are being fol-

lowed up. In another, retrospective, study the careers of university graduates were compared with their marks in examinations; the results of this study were published under the title *The Prognostic Value of University Entrance Examinations in Scotland*. In general, the investigators found a low correlation in teachers' estimates; the ablest pupils were correctly discovered but there were discrepancies on the remainder.

No new investigations needed to be undertaken in the United States, where examinations had been the subject of inquiry for the past thirty years. It is interesting to note, however, that despite the difference in organization of the American system of education, with its articulation of schools and provision of relative equality of opportunity, the question of examinations is no less pressing than in other countries, and for the same reason—the necessity of adapting education to the needs and abilities of individual pupils.

New York State has had a system of external examinations conducted by the Board of Regents since 1878. Efforts have been made to prevent cramming and making the examinations tests of memory only. The boards of examiners are carefully selected and prepared, and provision is made for a scrutiny of the papers and re-marking in doubtful cases. And yet variations have appeared in the percentage of failures from year to year in the same subject and from subject to subject. Discrepancies have been found between the marks given by the original mark-

ers, the teachers in the high schools, and by the examiners of the Board. There has been no consistency in the distribution of marks in a normal curve. In 1923 new-type tests were introduced as a part of the examinations by way of experiment. Increased reliability and consistency of marking were immediately noted. The fluctuations in the papers finally passed by the Board's examiners disappeared, and almost complete concurrence (ninety-seven per cent) between the original and final marks has been secured.

The history of another examining body, the College Entrance Examination Board, a private organization founded in 1900 and conducting examinations throughout the country, has been the same. Despite the care taken to provide checks and balances both in the preparation of questions and in marking papers, fluctuations of standards from year to year could not be avoided. In 1926 the scholastic aptitude test, a three-hour examination only, was introduced and was found to furnish a more reliable estimate of a pupil's promise than the traditional examinations.

Examinations have thus been attacked as a result of the application of scientific methods to education. These methods are not an American invention; although widely used in the United States, their development was stimulated by the work of Professor R. Y. Edgeworth, Sir Francis Galton, and Professor Karl Pearson in England, and Binet and Simon in France. Two facts that have been definitely established are, first, that the traditional examinations are

unreliable and inaccurate, and, second, that if, in the interests of the proper distribution of education and the guidance of the pupil, it is desirable to have as much information as possible about his personality, his interests, and his abilities, that information must be obtained not by one method alone, such as an examination, but by a variety of methods continued over a period of years and from as many sources as possible. In other words, the best guide to what a pupil has done and what he is capable of doing is the cumulative record card. How that may be used is illustrated by the following case discovered during the course of an inquiry in Pennsylvania:

*The Case of John Morton Smith, Jr.*<sup>1</sup> The facts concerning this boy were accidentally discovered in the records of a large city school which took exhaustive measures of its pupils but made no use of them because of the lack of an effective way to assemble and present them.

In 1927 John took college entrance examinations in five subjects. . . . He was refused admission because in English he ranked among the lowest 16 per cent, because the principal, supervisor, and mathematics teachers (all strangers to him) estimated his intelligence as below average, and because in a three-minute interview the college admissions officer could make nothing out of an excessively shy, self-conscious, and excitable lad.

The unused data in possession of the school when

<sup>1</sup> Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, *Program for a Study of the Relations of Secondary and Higher Education*, pp. 2 ff. (New York, 1928).

brought together in cumulative form tell a very different story; in fact they seem to indicate that the college officer who rejected this boy was actually dealing with a mind that should have been classed among the best 5 per cent of college risks. There are ten measures of John's intelligence . . . beginning in 1922, none of them falling below the ninety-fourth percentile. English fluctuates more widely but is nowhere below the eighty-fifth percentile, while of seven measures in French all but one are in the highest 2 per cent of modern language ability for the respective ages. The science line—general science, biology, physics, and chemistry—is lower but still well above the average. The four arithmetic measures are good, but the symbolic thinking required in algebra is indifferently done, and geometry is far down. Fearful of failure in the college examination in geometry, John's parents hired a tutor who had him commit to memory as many theorems as possible with the purely chance result there indicated. Drawing hovers about the average. A Stenquist test of mechanical ability shows poor success. Handwriting is very poor, thus doubtless explaining the low college entrance mark in English—the paper was illegible. Height and weight lines are much under average. Desiring to enter college a year earlier, the boy learned Spanish by himself when fourteen. The school refused to admit him to the college examination, but his teacher gave him a standard American Council Spanish test in which he scored in the ninety-seventh percentile for third-year students. The rating in oral Spanish at the same time was, of course, low.

In extra-curricular activities the scattered obtainable facts about this boy make an impressive showing when they are pieced together. When twelve years old he



brought to his English teacher an essay on "Shakespeare in Politics" highly documented from nearly every one of Shakespeare's plays. The following summer, having studied French for two years, he read by himself certain editions of four French authors and took the French teacher's examination thereon. Later he translated three short French comedies into English, and in his last year presented a lengthy study of geography that he had made from his French readings. Such work as this apparently earned him the maximum rating of "initiative" at the bottom of the card, although his first rating in that trait is the minimum because it was given by those in charge of group activities which he disliked. His "personality" rating is uniformly low. A psychiatrist rated him in 1923 as markedly introverted. His athletic activities include a little baseball, football, and tennis in early years, but after the age of thirteen these group sports give place to solitary hiking with a book. Similarly, dramatics and debating give way to what is called "journalism," which however, was discovered to consist entirely of reviewing learned books for the local paper. His success at his summer jobs is good, his ambitions and interests are steady and consistent.

Studied as a whole, this record gives indubitable indications of a mentality that may be close to genius. The separate items taken alone count little: but the sweep of evidence across even six years of this boy's life is unmistakable and should place the subject among those whom an institution handles with the utmost care. It is doubtless an extreme instance, but, if a case so obvious as this can be so badly bungled in our administrative procedure, it seems likely that the average child must be a frequent sufferer.

Hence the question whether examination should be abolished is answered by a movement to increase examinations of the old and the new type in number and scope, examinations varied in character according to the purpose for which they are to be used. But they should be standardized by experts in the field and administered by teachers trained to understand their significance for the improvement both of methods of instruction and of the education of the pupils concerned.

The problem of examinations is, further, more than an educational one; it is a social problem and its appropriate solution is fundamental to the provision of the best equipment for each individual according to his needs and abilities. It is not enough to discredit the accuracy and reliability of marking in the traditional system of examinations. More basic is the question whether a pupil is receiving the kind of education in content and methods best suited to his abilities. Hence, instead of a snapshot picture from one examination, what is needed is a moving picture of the educational career of each pupil. The ultimate function of tests and examinations and cumulative records is to discover abilities and interests in order that the right education may be provided for the right pupil under the right teacher.<sup>1</sup> Here lies the

<sup>1</sup> The full definition of the function of educational administration as given by Sir Graham Balfour is as follows: "To enable the right pupils to receive the right education from the right teachers, at a cost within the means of the State, under conditions which will enable the pupils best to profit by their training" (*Educational Administration*, p. 38, London, 1921).

essential difference between the totalitarian approach, which is interested in the education of the individual "in the right line," and the democratic, which is beginning to recognize the importance of adapting education to the abilities of individuals in the interests of themselves and of the society of which they are members.

M. Jean Zay, the Minister of National Education in France, when explaining in May, 1937, the motives of the decree for the establishment of guidance classes in a few selected secondary schools, made a statement which is almost identical in intent with that of Sir Graham Balfour. Referring to the problem of guidance, he said: "*C'est toujours imposé à la réflexion des éducateurs: mettre l'homme qui convient à la place qui lui convient n'est pas seulement pour l'individu une condition de bonheur, pour la société une garantie d'équilibre. C'est aussi une exigence de la justice sociale.*"

## XI. Education and the Challenge to Democracy

In the war of ideas which is raging between totalitarianism and democracy the special responsibility which falls on education in a democracy is too frequently ignored. This is in part due to failure to recognize the challenge to democratic ideals; it is due also to the basic difference between the two groups of ideas—totalitarianism because it is built on a set body of doctrines dominated by acceptance of the supremacy of the state has by far the simpler task in education, while democracy as an ideal is a way of life based on the freedom and responsibility of the individual. The democratic state depends upon the collective will of the individuals who make it up and exists to guarantee the rights of individuals and to maintain justice between them; though too frequently the free citizen of a democracy is more conscious of his rights than he is of his duties. The totalitarian state insists upon the co-ordination of all individuals so that all think and behave like all other individuals, and how they may think and behave is determined by a dictator or a party. The essence of democracy is that each individual thinks for himself

and behaves as his conscience dictates, provided that he does not encroach on the right of others to do the same. In the one case the individual must be "in the right line"; in the other the individual has a right to his own opinions.

The totalitarian state has recognized more clearly than the democratic the axiom already enunciated by Plato and Aristotle that education and the form of government are closely interdependent, that education, in other words, is an instrument of social control employed to perpetuate society and to advance social progress. Whether education is defined as a process of molding all individuals to the same pattern or of promoting progress through the enlightenment of all individuals depends upon the nature of the state and its form of government. Here is to be found the explanation of the interest shown in the provision of education by the nation states in the nineteenth century as well as the insistence of George Washington on the enlightenment of public opinion through "institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge."

A distinction was thus set up between education controlled in the interests of the state conceived as an entity existing apart from the individuals who make it up and education provided at public expense in order that individuals should become enlightened as free and responsible citizens. Contemporary totalitarian states, immediately after their establishment, seized upon education as a means for securing

their own stability and perpetuation. To promote these ends education has become a coercive, controlling force employing the methods of propaganda and deliberate indoctrination. Education exists as an instrument for the subordination of the individual to the will of the state and for inculcating unquestioning acceptance of a particular ideology. This is the central emphasis in Fascism, Nazism, and Communism which does not allow for what American sociologists call a cultural lag or what an English educator once called a break in gauge between the school and the political ideology. One common national aim, defined by authority, is set for education from the kindergarten to the university, so that the last stronghold for intellectual freedom has been attacked and destroyed.

While democracies tend to limit their concern to formal education in schools and universities, totalitarian states recognize no distinction between formal and informal education. Every aspect of life is seen as affecting the outlook and attitudes of individuals and is, therefore, brought under the control of the state, which, in the comprehensiveness of its concept of the meaning and scope of education, has no parallel in human history. All cultural influences—intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and religious or moral—are subordinated to this control. No one may write, no one may compose, no one may paint or sculpture unless he is a member of a cultural chamber or corporation, which determines what the public shall read,

what music it shall hear, what art it may enjoy. Hence, not merely the institutions for formal education, but those for informal education have been seized as instruments of state policy. Indeed, it is no exaggeration to say that more attention has been devoted to the informal agencies of education, such as youth movements and adult education. For the emphasis has shifted and the cult of emotions is regarded as more important than the cult of the mind in determining or conditioning behavior. The efficiency of all education is measured by the attainment of obedient submission and unquestioning acquiescence. The ideals in Nazi Germany are *Gleichschaltung*, or co-ordination in thought and conduct, and *Ver-schwiegenheit*, or silent and uncritical acceptance, while in Soviet Russia the safety and welfare of the individual depend upon his being "in the right line."

In the totalitarian states, then, education of every kind and at every level is dominated by a body of social, political, economic, and national doctrines and ideals as the essential bases of national solidarity. These doctrines and ideals or ideologies take the place of the Bible or the Koran and are promulgated with all the zeal of unreasoning fanaticism and intolerance. The attacks on religion are not merely attempts to subordinate ecclesiastical to political authority; they are deliberately aimed at the complete elimination of all competition between traditional loyalties and the new ideologies. In Soviet Russia the writings of Marx, Engels, and Lenin have taken

the place of the Bible, and a new ritual has been adopted—Lenin is enshrined as was the medieval saint and Red altars have taken the place of those of the church. In Germany Hitler's *Mein Kampf* has superseded the Bible, the swastika has been substituted for the Cross, German Christianity is to replace the alien spirit of traditional Christianity, Christ has become a Nordic, and to sing "Jesus Is My Leader" is high treason. If Fascist Italy has not been brought into this picture, it is not because Mussolini did not attempt to supersede the Vatican; in the schools, at any rate, Mussolini's portrait is hung almost on a level with the crucifix.

For, as Hitler stated in one of his May Day speeches, there must be only one god in the totalitarian state. "We shall simply walk over any groups who go against us," he said. "They must either bow to us or be broken. There can be only one authority. That applies to the churches, too. So long as they attend to their own affairs the state will not intervene. But if they go against us with sermons and encyclicals and encroach on the business of the state, we shall call them to order and we shall force them back into their proper place of caring for the religious needs of the people. They have no right to attack the morals of the state. They should concern themselves with their own morals." In other words religion must be reserved only for the Sabbath. It is more than a mere coincidence that President George Norlin gave to a pamphlet on Nazism the title *Hitlerism, Why and*



*Whither? Some Aspects of a Religious Revolution.*

The methods of all totalitarian states are identical. The first phase of each revolution is marked by terrorism, violence, concentration camps, and murder. "Thou shalt not" precedes "Thou shalt," and a propaganda to arouse suspicion, hate, and intolerance is conducted, whether against the bourgeois or kulak in Russia, or against Communists, liberals, and Jews in Germany and Italy. The methods of discussion and argument are suppressed in favor of dictation and coercion, so that one henchman of the *Fuehrer* can warn against grumbling and criticism,<sup>1</sup> and say that there are some with whom it is impossible to argue without first knocking out their teeth, and another can tell the German people that "since the Nazis came into power the only private life remaining is at night when you are asleep. You are a soldier of Hitler as soon as you are awake."

On the positive side the totalitarian states are built up on the principle of leadership with complete authority and without responsibility. Administration of all activities is placed in the hands of a hierarchy of henchmen loyal to the leader of the party. "Hitler is the law and will of the people"; "Mussolini is always right"; and "you" without a grandiose epithet is not enough, as Gide discovered in addressing a telegram to Stalin. In this atmosphere education is conducted and John Stuart Mill's fear of an efficiently state-controlled system of education is realized.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 63.

for "it establishes a despotism over the mind, leading by natural tendency to one over the body." Under such a regime all right to think is suppressed and what André Gide wrote in his *Return from the U.S.S.R.* applies to other totalitarian states: "In the U.S.S.R. everybody knows beforehand, once and for all, that on any and every subject there can be only one opinion. And in fact everybody's mind has been so moulded, and this conformism has become to such a degree easy, natural, and imperceptible that I do not think any hypocrisy enters into it. . . . Every morning the *Pravda* teaches them just what they should know and think and believe. And he who strays from the path had better look out! So every time you talk to a Russian you feel as if you were talking to them all. . . . If the mind is obliged to obey a word of command, it can at any rate feel that it is not free. But if it has been so manipulated that it obeys without even waiting for the word of command, it loses even the consciousness of its enslavement." Hence, as Mussolini stated, there must be "nothing against the state; nothing outside the state; everything for the state." Everyone is *gleichgeschaltet*, or reduced to that condition in which everyone thinks and acts as everyone else does.

This is the challenge which democracies have to meet if they are to survive; they must become as conscious of their ideals and aims as are the totalitarian states; they must develop and cultivate a faith in a moral equivalent of the totalitarian ideologies; they

must devote themselves to a searching study of the meaning and significance of the ideals and aims that they profess. Too long did democracies remain quiescent and tolerate attacks from totalitarian apologists. Only within the last few years has the defense of democracy been undertaken, and that in the main in the United States. No student and no teacher in a democracy can afford to ignore such books and pamphlets as Viscount Samuel's *The War of Ideas*, André Gide's *Return from the U.S.S.R.*, W. H. Chamberlin's *Collectivism, a False Utopia*, Hans Kohn's *Force or Reason*, B. H. Bode's *Democracy as a Way of Life*, Hamilton Fish Armstrong's *We or They*, Joseph Wood Krutch's *Was Europe a Success?*, Archibald MacLeish's *The Fall of the City*, and Thomas Mann's *The Coming Victory of Democracy*.

It is not enough for those who still have faith in the ideals of liberalism and democracy to adopt a negative attitude and express their opposition to totalitarianism on the ground that it is built up on dogmatic ideologies developed by dictators or parties claiming to be omniscient and assuming the right to impose their will as they please. It is not enough to deplore the threat to intellectual freedom from types of government that suppress all forms of freedom. The time has come when democracies must investigate carefully the charges of weakness which the apologists for totalitarianism bring against them, particularly the charges of an exaggerated cult of individualism and of the absence of a sense of social

responsibility. Because democracy is a way of life and not a set of dogmas or a creed, because it is an adventure aiming not at perfection but always perfecting, because its progress depends upon adaptation to changing needs and demands, education must play a much greater part in contributing to its stability than under those regimes where the dictator alone may decide what is for the good of a submissive and acquiescent public.<sup>1</sup>

Not only is the task of education in a democracy to cultivate enlightenment and to train the individual to think for himself; it must devote itself to the more positive aim of inculcating an understanding and appreciation of the significance of democratic and liberal ideals and a faith in free institutions and the method of argument as the best means of settling conflicts. The schools in a democracy will have failed if pupils and students are not brought to a realization that the whole history of mankind has been a struggle for those rights and privileges that totalitarian states have so quickly destroyed—personal freedom, freedom of worship, thought, and expression, justice, tolerance, and equality of opportunity on the basis of ability. As already pointed out in Chapter VIII, freedom is not a natural right; it must be for the individual, as it has been for humanity, a conquest through understanding of the rights of others and through self-discipline; the school must stress not self-expression but self-realization with a sense of

<sup>1</sup> See Fichte's statement, p. 66.

social responsibility. That these ideals which man has sought to attain in his long struggle for emancipation are fundamental values is borne out by the fact that even totalitarian writers bemuse their readers by invoking such terms as freedom, personality, self-realization, and so on. Although the last vestige of them has disappeared, the appeal is still made to what have come to be recognized as human values.

A democratic scheme of education has just as strong an obligation to develop a body of common traditions, loyalties, and interests as the basis of community life, but it cannot claim omniscience and infallibility of governments, for such a claim would reduce education to propaganda. The possession of a common body of traditions, loyalties, and interests is not incompatible with the development of methods of free inquiry and the recognition of personal responsibility. The essential task, however, is to inculcate a moral fervor and faith in democracy. The appeal of totalitarian states is primarily to the emotions, and education is becoming anti-intellectual; democracies must cultivate both the emotions and the intellect.

There are those, of course, who, deluded by the rapid achievements and the solidarity of totalitarian states, ignore the amount of force, coercion, and propaganda employed to secure them, and deplore the slow progress of democratic forms of government and the gradualness of liberalism. They forget that totalitarian states, established by force and violence,

must maintain themselves by the same methods, for "revolutions know no compromises." They need to be reminded of a statement by Samuel Butler in *The Way of All Flesh*, a statement which might well be adopted as a maxim of conduct by individuals and governments alike. "Extremes alone are logical," wrote Butler, "but they are inhuman; the mean alone is practicable but it is illogical." Democracy represents the middle way. "It moves," said Santayana, "by a series of checks, mutual concessions, and limited satisfactions; it counts on chivalry, sportsmanship, brotherly love, and on that rarest and least lucrative of virtues—fair-mindedness; it is a broad-based, stupid, blind adventure, groping towards an unknown goal."

For the search for that unknown goal the best equipment that a democracy can give its citizens is education, for upon them depends the shaping of the future, and not upon the will of a dictator or a party. This note was struck in 1937 by Earl Baldwin when in his Empire Day address he said, "The British Constitution has grown to what it is through the work of men like you and me—just ordinary people who have adapted the government of the country in order to meet the environment of the age in which they lived, and they have always preserved sufficient flexibility to enable that adaptation to be accomplished."

The challenge to democracies is clear; it is a challenge which calls for more education, but an education whose first aim must be the provision of an

environment for the flowering of personality—the self-realization of the individual to the fullest measure of his abilities. This flowering is possible only in an environment of freedom. It cannot be developed in an environment that is regimented, standardized, and directed to mass production, an environment which enshrouds individuality and personality in a monocolored shirt to reflect the monocolored mind. But the development of personal freedom insistently calls for a realization of responsibility to and for those democratic and liberal ideals and institutions which are the only guarantee of freedom.

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